

*Pt. Bishan Narain Dar's*  
**SPEECHES AND WRITINGS.**

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**VOL. I. (PART I.)  
&  
PART II.**

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EDITED BY  
**H. L. Chatterji M. A.**

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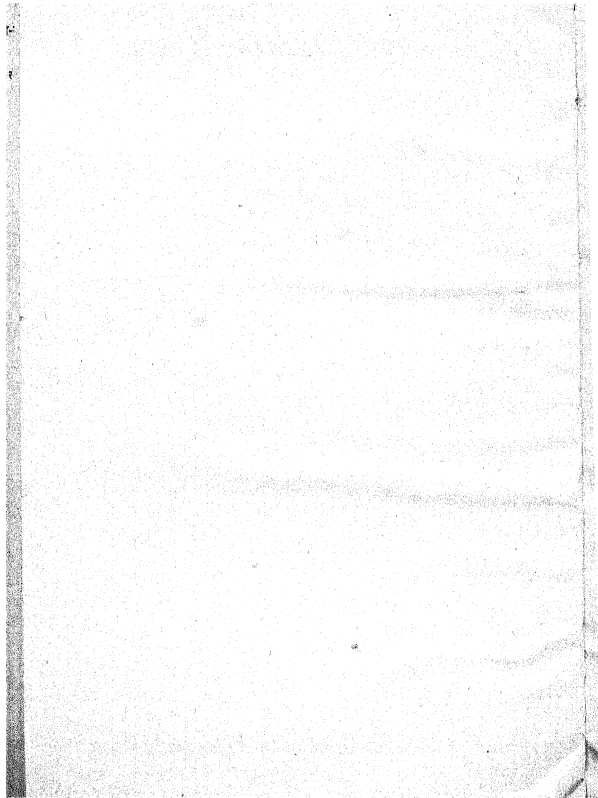
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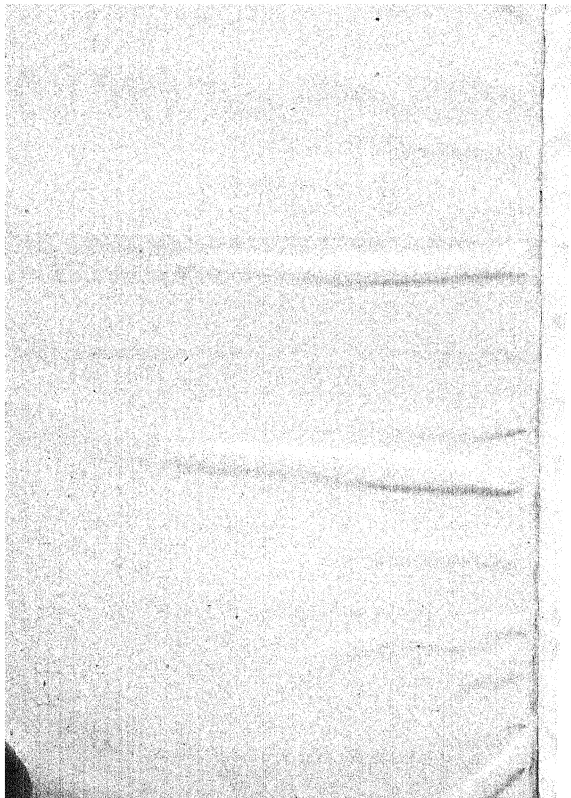
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## A SHORT SKETCH OF Pt. BISHUN NARAIN DAR'S LIFE.\*

(1864—1916.)

The Editor of the "Canning College Magazine" wrote in the issue for December 1916 as follows :—

*[On the eve of publication of this number comes the sad news of the death of one, perhaps the greatest, of our sons, Pandit Bishun Narain Dar. An account of his life and work will be found elsewhere. Probably few Indians had read so widely in the world's literature as he; and, though compelled by bodily infirmity to live upon the fringe of the busy working world, perhaps on this very account, few were capable of examining a point of controversy more acutely, few of pronouncing a sounder judgment. The death of a man is not entirely matter for tears, for he bequeaths to posterity the example of his virtue—no considerable portion of a good man's life. So will Pandit Bishun Narain live on in the hearts of those who loved and revered him.]*

"A strong and pure light is gone out, the radiance of a clear vision and a beneficent purpose." So wrote John Morley on the death of John Stuart Mill. A similar feeling overpowers our minds when we think of the tragic end of Bishun Narain Dar, in whose death "a strong and pure light" of thought and culture has suddenly disappeared from the intellectual horizon.

In the fulness and freshness of grief which is too sacred to attract public notice, it is not possible for me to give a complete survey of the useful and brilliant career which has closed so abruptly. But in obedience to the wishes of the Editor of the "Canning College Magazine," I propose to give in outline some of the salient features of the life and convictions of the man, whom I had long learnt to admire, nay, to worship.

The one prominent trait of his character, for which he stood marked out among his compeers, was his uncommon gift of intellectuality, aided by an intensely serious and reflective bent of mind. His studious temper revealed its highly intellectual leanings even in his school and college days. He once wrote to me that he had read and re-read Carlyle's Hero and Hero-worship before leaving school, and on joining the college classes, the books which delighted him most were Spencer's Study of Sociology, Essays, First Principles, Education, 'Data of Ethics'; MaxMullars 'Chips,' Lectures on India; Hume's Essays; and Mill's, Subjection of Women. He had little or no taste for fiction, and it was some years after his return from England that he was drawn to the study of Scott's Waverley Novels. He had his youthful imagination fired by the study of western literature, and it was not love of money, but his devotion to thought and culture that drew him to the

\* By Pandit Brij Narain Chakbast, B. A., LL. B., whose fine work in Urdu is appreciated to-day all over India—Editor.

foreign shores of England. He had to qualify himself for the Bar, and was the first Hindu barrister from Oudh ; but both by temperament and training he was unsuited for the contentious business of this wrangling profession.\* During his three years' stay in England from 1884 to 1887, the chief ambition of his life was to come in direct touch with the best representatives of English thought, and to assimilate the true spirit of western culture. This he did, and did successfully. While in England he interested himself most in the study of Sociology, Political Science, Moral Philosophy and Constitutional History ; and always stole a few half hours from his busy evenings to attend the lectures of men like Tyndall, Huxley, Frederic Harrison and others. It was in England that he learnt to write his chaste and nervous English, and drilled himself into the practice of public speaking. The first article he wrote in English was contributed to a Magazine published by the National Indian Association, which did some good work in England in the early eighties, but is probably defunct now. This article was written in strong opposition to Mr. Malabari's advocacy of state-interference with regard to widow-remarriage and early marriage ; because the young publicist was then saturated with the Spencerian doctrine of non-intervention, which, however, he had to give up in his maturer years.

The taste for serious study, which he cultivated so jealously both here and in England, had become a part of his mental fibre. He was never happy without his books, which were his constant companions. I may say that reading was his greatest luxury in life. One remembers how eagerly he finished the three volumes of John Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, when they were first published, in six days' time, and at the end expressed the desire : " Oh, I wish I could have a fourth volume to go on."† Even during his last twelve years of illness, when the shadow of death was deepening around him, every day, his zeal for his old intellectual pursuits remained unabated, and he kept himself abreast of the times by following carefully the current of modern European thought through the writings of its best exponents. The new library which he collected at Almora tells its own tale of the tragic beauty of his intellectual life. A pathetic interest attaches to the books which now lie in his library with their pages uncut, because they reached their reader at a time when the hand that could hold them had lost its power, and the eye that could look into them had lost its steadiness.

This habit of serious study and reflection gave an edge to his intellect, and an austere discipline to his mind. His deep analytical faculty which

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\* Mr. Chakrabarti should follow his master's example and cease stifling his genius with the dust of law courts. " *Not here, O Apollo ! are lawns meet for thee*."

Mr. Das was so enthusiastic that he thrust the III volume into my hands, when I happened to call upon him just as he had finished reading Lord Morley's *Magnum Opus*—Editor,

enabled him to discriminate between the permanent and the transitory forces of society, and to distinguish between the essentials and non-essentials of life, supplied him with power and capacity to maintain his philosophic calm in times of trouble and anxiety, when lesser men wavered and stumbled.

There may be still some in India who can rival Bishun Narain Dar in the extent and scope of their studies, but, I think, there are very few who can approach him in his great mastery of the principles of western thought, and his sound application of them to the changed environments of Indian society. Misinterpretation of the west to the east has been the source of much confusion and disorder, both in our thought and action. Bishun Narain seldom erred that way. In politics as well as in matters affecting social reform, his 'clear vision' came to his aid, in placing facts and events in their proper perspective, and enabled him to "see things steadily and see them whole." He greatly deplored the vagaries and absurdities of our social life, which have resulted from a meaningless but fashionable imitation of the superficial aspects of western life. While discussing this seamy side of the reform movement, he once said: "The changed point of view of life, upon which our young reformer prides himself so much, matters very little to me. The real problem before us is, how to adjust this changed point of view to our existing conditions."

His philosophic radicalism, founded as it was on the firm rock of reasoned truth and profound judgment, armed him with a courage of conviction and a strength and sincerity of purpose, which seldom failed him in his hours of difficulty and trial, and impressed all those who came in contact with him.

He believed in "a stormy patriotism, a patriotism independent and uncompromising, reckless of consequences and ready to do battle with every social evil." Twenty years ago he wrote: "The cup of political evils is so full, the burden of social iniquities has become so intolerable, and the tyranny of custom stands so red and foul, that a militant uprising of the better spirits in men has become one of the essential conditions of national salvation. Genteel patriotism waiting patiently for the millennium, when reforms will be worked out with rose-water, is not wanted; but a self-reliant and zealous patriotism, which mocks the calculations of the safe man of the world, and leads the man of forlorn hopes." And his heart continued to pulsate with this "self-reliant and zealous patriotism" till the last drop of blood had dried up in his veins.

Bold and fearless as he was in thought and action, his intrepid courage had not the least taint of vehemence or arrogance in it. "A virtuous mixture of boldness with tolerance of courageous speech with courageous reserve" was a marked feature of his private and public life.

Pandit Bishun Narain Dar's career had a literary side as well. He possessed a marvellous command over the English language, and was

master of a faultless and trenchant style. It would be presumptuous on my part to foist my opinion as to the grace and purity of his diction, which had its recognition from writers of European repute, Mrs. Flora Anna Steel, the famous Anglo-Indian novelist, being one of them. I may at least venture to say this much that, with the exception of the late Mr. N. N. Ghose, Bishun Narain was perhaps the most literary and thoughtful writer of his generation in India.

Among the writers of English prose he had a special liking for Carlyle, Froude, Matthew Arnold, Burke, Huxley, Morley and Harrison. He admitted Carlyle's influence on his way of writing. Macaulay had no peculiar charm for him, and it was many years after his return from England that he took to this author. He was a lover of poetry, and the masters of English verse who attracted him most were Byron, Shakespeare, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth and Tennyson. He had read very little of Milton, and was not much interested in his poetry.

Six or seven years after his coming back to India, his essentially literary temperament found a new source of inspiration in Urdu poetry, and its study became a passion with him for some time. He discovered a wealth of feeling and imagination in the Urdu poets of the past, to which the majority of the 'educated' Indians of his time were hopelessly blind.

The 'educated' young man of to-day condemns Urdu poetry, because he starts with a wrong conception of poetry itself. He takes English poetry for his standard of perfection, but fails to remember the fact that its emotional and imaginative side, wherein lies its true art, seldom finds a response in his alien heart. He confounds the element of thought there, which alone he is able to appreciate, with the essence of poetry itself, and finding that Urdu verse does not abound in patriotic and other 'modern' thoughts, he discards it as unworthy of his serious attention. This perverted ideal of poetry which had its origin in Aligarh, and which found its greatest champion in that scholar of rare merit, the late lamented Moulana Hali, was severely condemned by Bishun Narain Dar. He knew very well that it was not thought alone, but "thought distilled into emotion" which counted for true poetry. He always emphasised this distinction, and perhaps had this idea in his mind when he wrote:—"The chief merit of their (Urdu poets') poetry is its *sincerity*. It is a genuine reflex of their nature, and of the real nature of the society in which they lived, moved and had their being—whatever most agitated their minds, whatever kindled their emotions, and set fire to their brains found its way into their poetry, and so it is that, whether we like it or not, we cannot help feeling its magnetism, because it is sincere, has come from the innermost depths of the poet's heart, and is a genuine record according to their lights of what they thought and felt in this world." On another occasion, similarly, he showed his appreciation of the poetry of "Atush

and Mir" by writing, that "in its best moods it approached the heights attained by good European poets."

His poetic genius found its legitimate expression in Urdu, and he always tried to embellish his verse with good and noble ideas, without depriving it of the background of feeling and emotion. The following beautiful couplet belongs to his first *Ghazal*, which he composed some twenty-two years ago:—

حبیب ملک ہیں اپنے وطن سے ہسکو الفت ہے  
تسلے ولایت کہا کریں ہندوستان ہو کر

He was never really serious about his poetic art; and especially during his last days at Almora it had become a mere literary pastime with him. But in his moments of inspiration he composed lines which will always rank among the best and the finest specimens of the new school of Urdu poetry. Who can resist the charm of the verses like these:—

کس طوح راز گلشن ایجاد فاش ہو  
گلچہ دھن بھی پائے یہاں بے زبان دھ  
ہے بیکاری بھی اس خمخانہ عالم میں با گاری  
جو خالی بہتے ہیں وہ سر کا پیسہ نہ بھرتے ہوں  
قیسی دام رگ گل ہوں پرنگ رنگ گل  
اے صبا آزاد کردے صورت نگہست مجھے  
تھمت پاک ہی کافی ہے طہارت کے لئے  
نہ وضو چاہئے زاہد نہ تھمت مجھے کو  
اثر ہو سنے سے کانوں کو یا نہ ہو لیکن  
جو فرض تھا وہ ادا کر چکی زبان اپنا  
مہان حاکم و محکوم اک دیوار حائل ہے  
ادھر سے آہ بسمل بھی ادھر جاتی ہے مشکل سے  
ہسوں فرمان آزادی نہ کیوں خط غلامی ہو  
جو دست مہن درست تھا وہ قلم ہے دست دشمن مہن  
بچوں کو مان کی گود بھی مکتب سے کم نہیں  
اس مدرسہ میں حاجت لوح و قلم نہیں

His national ode (*Kasida*), which has for its theme his own 'dream' of the bright future of his community, is undoubtedly his best performance in Urdu verse. How beautifully does the following couplet portray the poet's awakening from the dream:—

ی والہ تھا یا کوئی بشارت تھی  
کہ بخت خفتہ قومی تھا خواب میں بیدار

*Murakkai Kashmir*, a poem dealing with the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from their beautiful home, though original in conception, is somewhat crude in form, and comes next to the national ode.



Nature had endowed him with a true literary sense, and it was really a source of inspiration to listen to his exposition of the finer shades of the poetic emotion, which found their mirror in the human heart alone, and eluded all scientific analysis. Death has silenced that gifted tongue now; and none feels the want of the guiding spirit of the Master more keenly than the present writer, who had the privilege of lighting his own little torch from the flame of his poetic genius.

In matters of belief Bishun Narain had no particular idol to worship. The rationalistic mould of his temper made his adherence impossible to dogmas of faith, which could not bear the fierce light of scientific scrutiny. In the prime of his intellectual manhood, when the light of ancient faith was burning low all over the world, his questioning spirit found its solitary refuge in the scientific creed of agnosticism. But he could never reconcile himself to its constructive and ethical aspect as understood by its great founder, Herbert Spencer, and had his own 'honest' doubts about it. This influence of Agnosticism, which lasted with him for a long time, lost its hold over him during the last years of his illness. Some six years ago I heard him saying, that he had learnt to believe in the doctrine of *Karma*, admitting, at the same time, that he was not prepared to defend this change of faith on scientific grounds. In speaking of this change of faith a dark shade came over his reflective brow, which made me speechless, as it had its own significance for me; and from that day onward I had not the courage to re-open this topic again.

Though Bishun Narain was not a religious man in the ordinary sense of the term, yet life had always a deep significance for him. He believed in and felt for the reality of things. This 'spiritual' view of human affairs explained his magnanimous indifference to ephemeral fame, and to other short-lived and doubtful 'glories' of life, which not un-often act as a snare for the best of our men. It was not on the platform or in the press, but in the sublime simplicity of his social life, that his character revealed its true greatness. If there was ever a man who had no personal ambition in life, and who literally speaking lived for others, it was Bishun Narain. The idea of generosity was not a mere intellectual luxury with him. It was a living force, which permeated every nerve and fibre in him, and made his character an example of unsophisticated virtue, noble in thought as well as in action, always ready to help those who required his help, entirely free from sordid motives of hatred and revenge—he was verily a creature of finer clay, a sage of rare courage and wisdom, a very prince among men. It was on account of these living qualities of virtue, that the affection of his friends had deepened into veneration for him. The public mourns the politician and the scholar, but the man Bishun Narain transcends them all in his pristine and 'spiritual' glory, and remains for the eye of faith a 'lost star' of love, hope and devotion.

It was not for me to describe Bishan Narayan Dar's public activities; I must leave that task to abler and freer hands than mine. But I had known him intimately for six and twenty years and it was my proud privilege to have sat at his feet during the most impressionable years of my life, and it is of his private life, of his life in the midst of his books and among his friends that I would fain speak. I believe that intellectually he was among the foremost man of his generation, and in sheer brain power he had few equals and no superior. He remained a student all his life and he loved his favourite books with a passionate and profound love. His taste was all for serious study: people will be surprised to hear that he did not read any novels till comparatively late in life. Carlyle, Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, Frederick Harrison and John Morley were his favourite authors, and he read and re-read them till the best that was in them became an integral part of his mental constitution. He used to note his readings at the end of his books and if you look into them you will seldom find a book which he had read less than three times. But while he read much he thought even more, and his disciplined and discriminating intellect enabled him easily to pick its brain out of a book. In discussing the argument or line of thought of a new book with him one felt that Bishan Narayan Dar's mind was so equipped and arranged, that whatever was worth retaining was at once given its appropriate place in his well-stocked brain in relation to the rest of his knowledge. As is evident from his writings, Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar was a singularly clear and sound thinker. It was seldom, very seldom, that he was wrong, and he was certainly never confused. English he wrote as if to the manner born. Read his *Signs of the Times*, his essay on the *Decay of Genius in India*, his paper on *Education*, his lecture on the *Formation of Opinion*—published in the "*Hindustan Review*", and it is impossible not to be struck by the clarity of his thought and the richness and virility of his style. His essay on *Hindustani Literature*, published in the *Advocate* as a review of Sheikh Abdul Qadir's *New School of Urdu Literature* and his essay on *Ratan Nath Sharshar* published in the *Hindustan Review* are models of what literary criticism should be. For he was a lover of the Urdu tongue; his mastery of a foreign idiom did not blunt the edge of his fondness for his own language. Azad and Sarshar he regarded as the masters of Urdu prose, each in his own domain, and his favourite Urdu Poets were Atash, Ghalib and Anis.

Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar was naturally of a modest and retiring disposition, and it was literally true of him that 'you must love him ere to you he will seem worthy of your love.' He was too proud to exhibit his heart in a glass-case, and that pushing, hustling "modern" frame of mind, which regards modesty as a weakness of fools, and the lime-light of publi-

city and the admiration of a gaping and indiscriminating crowd as the veritable kingdom of heaven, he was an utter stranger to. He appeared at his best in the circle of his intimate friends,—talking about his favourite authors and discussing public affairs—always easy, cheerful, courteous and urbane. He was absolutely free from pettiness, moral or intellectual, and the way in which he helped those who had actually tried to injure him, showed that he had the generosity not only to forgive but to forget. He had an uncommonly strong will, but the sweetness of his disposition and the clarity of his intellect never allowed it to degenerate into mere stubbornness or *Zid*. Though for years in the grip of a fell disease and living practically under a sentence of death, he never allowed it to unnerve his mind or to cloud the natural cheerfulness of his disposition. His keen, massive intellect remained undimmed to the very last, and he made several valuable contributions to the discussion of current public questions during his ten years of illness. The speech which he delivered at the Lucknow Session of the Provincial Conference, when he appeared for the first time in public after years of protracted illness, is still remembered by many. His listeners were made to feel that there was tempered steel within the frayed and battered sheath, and his spirit was unquenched, his will firm, and his wit keen and biting. What and how many even more valuable contributions he would have made to the intellectual life of his country had his health not broken down must ever remain one of the fond and regretful might-have-beens!

MANOHAR LAL ZUTSII, M.A.

### B

The sketches above give some of the outstanding features of Mr. Dar's career. A few personal impressions are here jotted down to bring into prominence one or two aspects of his character.

As a man he belonged to the Socratic household, so austere and simple was his life. Nobody ever found him obsessed with any particular craze, which those who came back from England in the eighties brought with them, and which they unblushingly delighted to flaunt before the public eye. Though imbued with the traditions of Western civilisation he never bent his knee to the Moloch of fashion. He studiously avoided to affect a foreign pose,—he hugged no outlandish mode—he lavished no caresses on the glittering paraphernalia of life with which people who visit foreign parts love to surround themselves. The appointments of his rooms were homely in the extreme and lacked all extraneous colour, and to him more than even to Shakespeare's *Prospero* his library was dukedom enough. He maintained an attitude of fine reserve and reticence, and, unlike the leaders of a later day, he never, in all his public utterances, even while exposing the ugliest spots

in our social polity and in bureaucratic administration, threatened or blustered. In his last years, when he was descending step by step into the vale of darkness, he preserved a sweet core of geniality through physical pangs "which would have dropped acid into a less wholesome nature," and, in the midst of the disease which had fastened its remorseless fangs, the old fire lingered as if "to illumine the wreck."

As a scholar he seldom swerved from the shining track of the best modern authors. He never desecrated the inner intellectual shrine. No foul breeze from reeking pastures swayed the sacred altar-flame. The courts of the temple were kept scrupulously clean from all kinds of soilure. He never browsed on garbage. He was extremely loath to dip into season novels and volumes of the smart, racy, vivacious type with which the markets are deluged. His shelves harboured no sensational Memoirs, no piquant Confessions, no thrilling Reminiscences. He studied his favourite books over and over again till their thoughts circulated through his veins. Alone among the distinguished band of Indians, whose fame has spread beyond the rigid old frontiers of this country, Mr. Dar made the nearest approach to the ideal of Lord Morley so beautifully sketched in the *Study of Literature* and in the *Recollections*. He turned his mind away from all spurious outward symbols and things which bear enchanted social labels, and undeviatingly followed the gleam.

As a writer few Indians have excelled him so far as method, argument, diction, choice of words, avoidance of garrulous circumstantiality and strict adherence to recognised linguistic mandates are concerned. There are no loose joints in the logical development of the subject, no verbal surplusage, no tedious prolixity, no inconsequent digressions. Each sentence has its poise—each paragraph its well-knit significance. The resplendent threads are woven into a perfect web. Even he who reads these pages as he runs will see brooding over them a triple halo of wise thought, vivid emotion and sustained eloquence.

The present volume of selections is primarily intended for those who, under the stress of circumstance, are taking a vigorous part in educational, literary, or political work. Amidst the present intellectual confusion and economic chaos "when life's helm rocks to windward and lee," the observant reader will find a centre of radiant rest, a golden atmosphere peculiarly free from rude conflicts and clashings of the coarse weapons of party warfare. Not that Mr. Dar did not hit hard when occasion required—not that he hesitated to launch his keenest shafts at the gray nurses of a day gone by, at dogmatism and sacrosanct prescription, thus creating a flutter in placid dovescots; yet his rationalistic temper and the extreme elegance of his language will always produce a soothing effect on nerves lacerated by present-day political controversies. As in the case of Erasmus, 'the sole passion of his life was the love of letters and liberal thought, and his sole desire and

aim was to let the purifying breath of 'knowledge and cultured intelligence cast its wholesome influence on time-honoured opinions, customs, institutions.' The chaste style in which Bishan Narain habitually wrote, and the high plane of thought in which he always moved, are bound to appeal to all men, who, as the day broadens, will evince a genuine interest in the larger spheres of civic life. In almost every field he broke new ground, and, though he possessed a robust optimism, he never played the role of a platonic dreamer weaving misty utopias, or a pious visionary wreathing ineffectual rainbow patterns, or a purblind theorist suffusing his writings with morbid and inflammatory sentimentalisms.

The homes of culture which are being organised on a new basis, and in which the voice of Indian savants has become the decisive factor will, it is hoped, welcome these essays and addresses of one whose brilliant contributions to the Press were, for twenty years, read with reverent wonder and eager delight.

LUCKNOW:

26th October 1921.

H. L. CHATTERJI.

## INTRODUCTION.

### BISHAN NARAIN DAR—AN APPRECIATION.

Bishan Narain Dar was more a thinker than an active worker. From early manhood he was drawn more to philosophy than to the material interest of life. In other times and in a different social atmosphere, he would have remained a student of the more abstract branches of our knowledge. But fortunately for us an independence of spirit and a love of wider horizon drove him from home to England. And a short stay in that country when her politics were charged with the liberalism of Gladstone, and lifethere was electric with the clash of nationalist ideals struggling with Unionist methods, cured him of that metaphysical touch which it had developed would have buried him in a college or a library. His introduction into a set of liberal political workers strengthened his fibres, and he plunged into paths which they tread who work for the betterment of their kind. Freshness of youth joined to the love of men drew him to the Religion of Humanity and for a time he came within the fold of the Positivist Society. He drifted away from Positivism in later years but the "Service of Man" had left its colour on his mind.

He stay in England and his studies there brought him in contact with men who had seen and worked with Mill. To us now he is only the saint of Rationalism, then he was its apostle as well. Bishan Narain Dar also came to know 'his Mill as the old Puritans knew their Bible.' He saw Huxley and Spencer. His own independence of temperament made him a student of Spencer, but the tradition of his own institutions and perhaps his own common sense kept him from the extreme *laissez faire* of Spencer's philosophy. Its rugged individualism verging almost to "administrative nihilism" as Huxley termed it repelled him. Huxley's writings with their practical sense and grace of style attracted him better, and his Lay Sermons claimed his constant attention. He read Huxley in Switzerland on the shores of Lake Geneva, where his limited purse often drove him to make up for the heavier cost of life in England. And in spite of the charge of 'regimentation' which Spencerians brought against the view of their opponents, and the clerical affinities with which Spencer chaffed Huxley, it was the latter's hold which deepened on Bishan Narain Dar. Burke had early claimed him, and Morley as the last surviving champion of a cause which counted Burke and Mill among its promoters received his living homage. He read extensively and thought deeply, and curiously enough divided his love between these writers of liberalism and Carlyle. Sitting at the feet of so many great writers and wresting from them the secret of their philosophy and the mystery of their greatness he evolved sanity of outlook which compensated him for a certain lack of

driving enthusiasm—the gift of those who worship at a single shrine and admit no second god to their pantheon. To the end of his days there was in Bishan Narain the light of Mill, the warmth of Burke, and an uncompromising hostility of opinion, which Carlyle alone could have given him, to all that he thought militated against the good of his country. But above all was discernible the mellow suavity which Huxley coveted in his autobiographical sketch, and which he possessed in such a charming abundance.

His early training and subsequent mental discipline marked him for the prominence he attained. His keen political insight held the promise of greater things, but failing health confined him to the role of a guide and friend. That in the restricted sphere left open to him, he managed to grip the mind of his countrymen is a phenomenon remarkable in itself. Bishan Narain advanced with the advance of time. How we stood then, and what we have since achieved would strike despair from the heart of Pessimism. From the lisping accents of the early nineties to the clear enunciation of the Home Rule creed proclaimed far and wide from Simla, marks a transition of which any generation may be proud, and is an abiding monument to the good faith of England whose people, in the words of Bishan Narain himself, respond not less readily to the call of liberty than the harp responds to the harper's touch. Throughout the period—a chequer work of light and shade—he stood firm beside those who laid stone on stone, admonishing some, guiding others and encouraging all. His faith in the work transcended the difficulties which a misguided zeal for order or enthusiasm for reform were creating in its way. His faith in the workers and the people for whom they worked kept him strong, confident and hopeful. His courageous mind saved him from the confusion of half-uttered thoughts and half-formulated beliefs and never made a twilight for his convictions. He stood for all that we wanted and all that he thought we deserved.

Bishan Narain's intellect did a good deal for us, hampered as it was by a failing health, or else Indian skies would have been narrow for the sweep of its wings. But there was another aspect to the services he rendered to his country. His love of study had led him to poets both English and Persian and the wisdom he gathered from these he translated into verse in Urdu. Urdu poetry has the defects of Persian poetry without its vitality. For generations it had been hide-bound in the conventions of Urdu poetic art, and its lyrical genius was put to the baser uses of plaintive inanities. Bishan Narain, himself a poet of great merit, struck these off and in his plastic hand Urdu verse became a clear channel for the reflection of higher and more natural sentiments. His poem on the Exodus from Kashmir is unique in Urdu Literature, both in conception and the method of its execution. He

was for ever widening the range of its expression, and it is greatly to his initiative that we owe from other hands a number of lyrical poems seriously narrative and patriotic. It is these poems sung in the streets and passing from hamlet to hamlet that will touch the minds of the many, and kindle in them the spark which will feed the flame of a national life. Where ballads will tell of the life of India and voice the feelings of her people Bishan Narain will only be a name, but the credit of the pioneers will be his in no little degree.

The life of Bishan Narain was that of a student. Reading was a passion with him, and his residence was the gathering place of learners who came to him for guidance and enlightenment. Apart from the public services he rendered, he took a younger generation in hand, and instilled in them an enthusiasm for a wider acquaintance with the political and literary writers of England. He built up an atmosphere of study and thought and culture around him, from which all benefitted who came under his influence. He breathed into them a love of earnest effort and tolerant struggle. He was an inspiration to those who had the fortune of coming in personal touch with him, and he remained an example for others who could read and know of him from a distance. Indelible in his nature was the impress of his early association, and liberalism in thought or belief was an article of his faith, and with deep instinctive passion did he hold the creed, that 'where freedom lives not, there live no good things'.

SHAM NATH MUSHRAN.

## ERRATA.

### FOOTNOTES.

Page 241 Supply *the* after *of*.

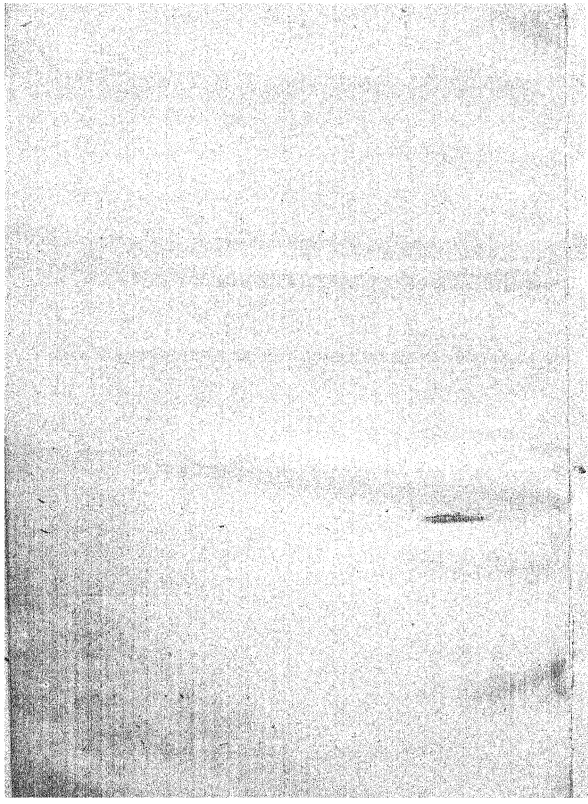
" 290 Read *attitude* for *attitude*.

" 325 Read *into* for *with*.

" 341 Read *so* for *as*.

*ch a m*





## OUR EDUCATION.

In a country where nature and custom are alike favourable to the propagation of the race, one should have thought that the art of bringing up offspring upon lines most conducive to their happiness and usefulness would be occupying the first place in the consideration of its best men. But the anarchy which marks all transitional epochs is nowhere more clearly visible, or more terribly disastrous both in its near and remote consequences than in the system of education which the collective wisdom of India has chosen to give to her younger generation. While the mass of the population are even ignorant of their ignorance, the instructed few who think for the many and guide them, are far from having hit upon the right plan. To educate the young is a duty which faintly and vaguely they have come to realise, but the methods which they have from time to time adopted for discharging it are no better than leaps in the dark. Yet if there is anything more than another in which it is of the utmost importance to have a clear aim and a well-defined ideal, it is Education.

Life in each organism depends upon a proper adjustment of internal changes and external circumstances. In the sentient world from the lowest to the highest order of life, this conflict between organism and environment is going on, and is known under the name of the struggle for existence. Those who are successful in the struggle survive; those who fail, die away. But the conditions of success are not haphazard and arbitrary. They are fixed and defined by the needs of organic life and by the adaptability of the forces of nature to those needs. Those, who can obtain the maximum of satisfaction with the minimum of friction with their environments, succeed; but those who fail to adapt themselves to the circum-

stances in which they are placed, go to the wall. Human society is governed by the iron law of the animal world. The tendency of population to outstrip the bounds of subsistence has placed us all under the primal curse of eating our bread by the sweat of our brow, and has made conflict—sometimes harsh and wasteful like that of Nature ‘red in tooth and claw’, sometimes pacific in which ‘the individual withers but the world is more and more’—the first condition not only of progress, but of mere existence. The conditions of the conflict, although fixed in their broad outline by Nature, are yet in their various details modifiable by the hand and purpose of man; and a knowledge of these it has come down to us through the long vistas of time in the shape of inherited instincts and improved intelligence suited to the higher needs of a more advanced stage, may be called ‘the Education of the human race.’

Viewed in this light it would appear that if happiness be the aim of progress, that if progress presupposes activity, mental, moral and physical, which, in other words, means life, and that if the maintenance of life depends upon a successful struggle with the centrifugal forces of man and society, then a careful and accurate knowledge of the conditions under which the struggle for existence is being carried on in India should be the first concern of Indian parents to impart to their children, and the first duty of the State to communicate to its members. That system of Education is needed here which would equip our young men with those arts and sciences which have special reference to the wants and requirements of the present age—which making due allowance for our national habits and temperament may yet enable them to participate in the gifts and graces of modern civilisation. Yet the chief feature of our existing Education is that it entirely ignores the primary conditions of individual and national existence, and takes no account of the new social and political circumstances which are moulding for good or ill the destinies of Indian youths.

It may be well to describe in this place briefly and concisely the particular features of the Educational problem which has just been stated in general terms. For this purpose we must remember two things. First, the Government being in the hands of foreigners who are superior to us in morality, in intellect, in mechanical skill, and in material resources, the conditions of the competition in so far as it holds between the rulers and the ruled, have become harder and more stringent than before. In all those matters in which there exists a legitimate, or, at least a necessary rivalry between the man and the State, we have to bear in mind that it is not only that we have to deal with a Government whose interests, by the necessities of its alien position are not identical with ours, but with a Government composed of men who are as a body in every way superior to us ; and that, therefore, while it may have been easy to hold our own against the Mohamedan rulers who stood on the same mental and moral level with ourselves, a successful struggle with the present rulers requires a newer and more improved moral and intellectual equipment altogether. Secondly, peace which has been established under the *Pax Britannica* in this country, and the check which civilized legislation has placed upon plagues and famines have given a remarkable stimulus to the increase of population ; while public instruction of a certain kind, freedom of the press, competition in the fields of the public service, and free-trade with the best trading peoples of the west, have created new aspirations, and opened out fresh fields for labour and enterprise ; and these have made the conditions of the struggle for existence more difficult and more complex than those which obtain in simpler and more primitive social groups. Thus we have to recognise this double-aspect of the conflict, competition, or struggle for life, or for such things as add to the comforts and the pleasures of life—a keen competition between the people and the Government on the one hand, and among the people themselves on the other. Now, in order to hold our own against a Government intensely patriotic,

highly intellectual and moral, brave and enterprising, it is necessary that our own patriotism should be strong and alert, that our mental discipline should be of a high order that we should know how to unite and organise our efforts, that we should be well-trained in the Physical Sciences and their practical application to human life that have given the English their present mastery over the forces of nature. Again, in order to cope successfully with the problem of subsistence which the growth of our population has brought to the front, and the gravity of which has increased from our utter indifference to every other occupation except the Service and the Law, the cultivation of those branches of knowledge which help the acquisition of wealth and the economy of the existing resources, has now become the *sine qua non* of our national existence. But the Education of our boys does not concern itself with these considerations. It is faulty from a scientific point of view ; it is utterly useless from the particular stand-point of Indian Society. It is difficult to convince Indian parents of the defects of their Educational system, both because those who have themselves been trained under it can hardly be its unbiased judges, and because even among men of culture and intelligence confused and contradictory notions prevail regarding Education—by some it is supposed to point the royal road to money-making, by others as something purely speculative, and “too good for human nature’s daily food”, by some as a panacea good for all men and at all times, by none as a process of adaptation of organism to environment, which is different for different people under different circumstances, never the same for any people at two different stages of its progress. Still by looking at the existing Education in its twofold aspect—mental and moral—it may be possible to see how unsuited it is to the needs of those for whose benefit it is maintained, nay, further, how on its moral side it is producing evils which if left unchecked much longer, may land the Indian society in a fearful moral chaos.

Let us take the intellectual Education first. Much depends upon the teacher; and who are the teachers of our boys? Those who are not deficient in anything so much as in the art of teaching. And yet if the teacher does not know how to teach, no one else does. A trained teacher is a rare commodity in India. Perhaps the need for one is not felt; perhaps not many are aware how difficult and delicate is the task of educating the young—moulding their plastic mental constitution after some desirable pattern, directing their rude and untamed energies into useful channels, bringing out their latent powers and giving them the direction suited to their natural bent, rooting out gently and gradually the tares of evil tendencies, and tending lovingly and gratefully the shoots of such as abound in promise of goodness. Few teachers have this conception of education, fewer still who know how to realise it in practice. The training of those, therefore, who have to train others is a great desideratum in our educational system. But it is not only that we have no teachers scientifically trained in the art of teaching; in the primary and middle schools we have few teachers who possess sufficient commonsense to give any kind of teaching whatever. The most impressionable years of our boys are passed in the company of the worst class of teachers. It is a very serious thing, because the mischief thus caused to young minds is irreparable. The powers of the mind are soft and plastic; a foolish master may twist them so that they may never become straight again; and it is the few years of boyhood which decide whether knowledge shall be dreaded and disliked in maturer years, or followed as a source of imperishable delight.

With teachers who do not know how to teach education must be mechanical, and cramming must thrive. The Geography of India, or it may be of Asia, is taught to little boys who do not know the Geography of their own towns. His-

tory is taught as no more than a series of battles and a chronology of kings. The sequence of cause and effect is not shown, nor any moral lessons drawn from the series of historical facts. Grammar or the Science of language is taught before the boys have learnt anything of any language. Almost all teaching is confined to books; no efforts are made to impress upon their minds that the words written in books have any real correspondence in nature. Thus it is that while memory is sometimes abnormally sharpened, reason is left to starve, and the powers of observation remain stunted and undeveloped. While this is the method of education, the character of education is almost purely literary. This holds good at the lowest classes as well as the highest. Admitting the value of the three R's, still it is a very poor sort of education which rests contented with them. In India a purely literary culture is best with special dangers. We are an imaginative people our writings and speeches often suffer from rhetorical exaggerations; precision and exactness of thought, which come from a close observation of the facts of nature, are not among the principal traits of our national intellect. We prefer literary to scientific culture because it is more showy than the other; and like some savages we love the ornamental more than the useful. Science requires patience, close scrutiny of the concrete facts of nature; it does not win applause so readily as literature, nor appeal to the sentimental side of our nature. But while so far our natures are to blame for this general aversion to scientific culture, those who are entrusted with the task of shaping and moulding them after useful pattern, cannot avoid their share of blame, which belongs to them also for doing practically nothing to modify our intellectual biases.

The bifurcation of studies which the Allahabad University has brought down to the Entrance class is in my opinion a step in the wrong direction. It is a subject which re-

quires a separate discussion, but one or two considerations having a bearing upon the questions raised in this paper may be hazarded here. The object of the bifurcation of studies is to enable the students to have an option in the choice of literary and scientific subjects according to their peculiar wants or the bent of their individual minds. But the system is faulty because it begins at a time when the student does not know his vocation in life, nor is he competent to understand the direction of his intellectual tastes and tendencies. Before one can be in a position to specialise any branch of knowledge he must have some idea of knowledge in general. If we teach our boys the elements of science, the first principles of logic and philosophy, give them an idea of history and geography, open their eyes to the charms of literature, make them a little acquainted with the simpler truths of law and political economy—then indeed we may, before they choose the next step upwards in their educational progress, be justified in allowing them, after they have equipped themselves with a rough chart of the vast realms of knowledge which lie unexplored before them, to choose their own line, to strike out their own path, just as their individual mental tastes may dictate, or their individual social aims and ideals may suggest. But how a boy reading in the entrance class ignorant of the elements of physical, mental, moral, and social sciences can be expected to specialise his studies, to choose wisely for himself the course of his future mental discipline, I fail to perceive.

But there is another objection to the system which has received its finishing touches at the hands of the Allahabad University. Every educational system, I hold, should be adapted to the particular social and moral needs of those for whom it exists. Now, is the bifurcation of studies at the very threshold of high education suited to the tendencies and temperaments, the wants and requirements of our boys? I say no, without fear of contradiction, because I know that



even if they were competent to choose for themselves the directions of their studies, according to their mental predispositions, they are influenced by certain moral and social forces which would in the majority of cases pervert their judgment, and vitiate their choice. Imaginative by nature, living in a society over which there still hovers the sombre shadow of a romantic past, nursed in a semi-religious, semi-moral code whose dominant note is asceticism, and whose ideal of human existence is the calm, contemplative life of a Hindu hermit or a Mohomedan sufi, having no other conception of the preparation for the battle of life than entering the public service or the bar, or, if at all moved by higher aspirations, setting up as social or political reformers, and governed and guided by the public opinion of those who have not yet learnt to appreciate any other career but that which brings money or popular applause; it is no wonder if our young men prefer literary to scientific culture—place the training which is of immediate use and help to them in the professions to which their energies are at present confined, to that which whatever may be its advantages on the whole and in the long run, offers no practical inducement to those who by the living example of their betters and by their social traditions are led to think that the Government service and the bar are the only careers suited for a gentleman. If institutions, like trees, may be judged by their fruits, the results of the bifurcation of studies are apparent from the fact that a much larger number of our young men take up A or literary course than those who read B or scientific course. Mental leaning, like motion, seeks the line of least resistance, and young men naturally cultivate those branches of knowledge which fit them for such careers as they like most, or as alone are open to them, and bring them money and social applause. But if this is a vicious tendency, if there are deep and solid reasons why the physical sciences should be cultivated in this country, then it is the duty of

the University to recognise this fact and to mend its system in accordance with it. An Indian University ought to guide and instruct, not follow and encourage the prevailing intellectual tastes and tendencies of the people, and there are moral and social considerations, potent to those who can look straight and see clear, which make it imperative on the part of our educationists not only to make the elementary teaching in science a necessary part of the general culture, but to provide additional inducements for the study of the higher branches of the physical sciences in order to give a practical turn to the Indian intellect which has for centuries upon centuries been dreaming dreams of Nirvana.

Turn I now to the moral aspect of the Education which our boys receive. Home-influences stand first in the order of merit; and the greatest influence in every home is woman. But in this country, unfortunately, we have to deal with a topsy-turvy society of fathers and no mothers. The most impressionable years of an Indian boy are spent in the society of an ignorant, superstitious, narrow-minded mother, and a father who if he is not so ignorant is seldom able to avoid the moral contagion of his wife. An Indian boy thus grows up in a household at once divided and distracted, in the society of his elders whose example is not always exemplary, under the fostering care of a mother who feeds his childish whims with lies which even he is never long in detecting and pours into his receptive mind the tales of abject superstition; in the company of a father who teaches him, by precept and practice, that the be-all and the end-all of human life is money, by whatsoever means it may be acquired, that self is the centre of all aims and actions, and social good a chimera and a dream; that belief is a virtue and doubt a sin of the deepest dye, that we should do as we are told and follow our elders because they are our elders; and when such is the moral atmosphere which envelops his life, it is easy to conceive why he develops into a man of low ideals and

narrow pursuits, why most of his later Education which he receives through books serves no more than as a mere superficial veneer which the slightest contact with the rough world rubs off, why he remains under the spell of tradition, why he bows his knee to the Moloch of superstition, why his ethical sense instead of growing and expanding, is twisted, stunted, and withered.

While such are the home influences under which our boys grow up, there is no moral training given in the public schools and Colleges. I admit the difficulty of the Educational Department in the matter. No moral training without some sort of religious teaching can be effective in a country like India, but no religious instruction can for obvious reasons be undertaken by the Department. However, my present purpose is to point out the evil—not to suggest its remedies—I have pointed out, in brief, certain influences which are moulding the intellect of our boys. Similarly I have to point out here certain forces which are shaping their character, for better or for worse.

Although without religion there can hardly be any adequate moral instruction, yet much might be done even in this direction if teachers and professors only knew their duty. I must frankly admit that in the lower classes of our schools, the teachers are both mentally and morally unfit to exercise any healthy moral influence over their pupils. In the Entrance and the College classes they as a rule possess this fitness. Principals and Professors are men of high accomplishment—specially the European professors who have themselves breathed the purest air of their own Universities, who by their sterling moral qualities can be very good moral instructors of our boys, and whose example is particularly needed at the present juncture to call into exercise those moral feelings in their pupils, which the exigencies of modern civilization have invested with a new significance. But unfortunately between the professors and their pupils there

exists no intimacy. After the College hours, all connection seems to cease. The professor goes his way, and the student his; and the occasions of a friendly social intercourse between them are few and far between. This is partly due to the present constitution of our Universities which do not make it compulsory for their students to reside in their vicinity, partly to the ordering of our society and its pursuits and occupations; but partly also to the fact that even European professors, influenced by the considerations of colour and conquest, are not able to mix on terms of friendship and social equality with their students. It is no imaginary grievance against European teachers; the students feel it as real, and this alone makes it worthy of some consideration. I know Canning College very well, and its students; but no literary movement ever started by the latter was ever in the beginning much helped or encouraged by its teachers, who even when in course of time they came to take it under their patronage, seldom took part in its proceedings or gave it the benefit of their wise direction. Its professors seldom choose to seek or create occasions when they may come in close social contact with their pupils, and diffuse among them those healthy moral influences which a teacher worthy of his calling, knows how to instil into the minds of young men. What is true of Canning College, is true more or less of all our educational institutions. On the contrary if the professors so choose, they can, as in the M. A. O. College of Aligarh, be a powerful moralising and humanising force among their students. There is no peculiar virtue in the Aligarh College professors, but the credit is due to the managers who won't have any one as a teacher of their boys who was not prepared to follow their system. In this sense, the Government can do much, if it likes. It can encourage teachers, with such manifestations of its pleasure as are so effective in other spheres, in cultivating affectionate and friendly relations with their pupils.

Be this as it may, the present state of things which is by no means a desirable one is this ; we have teachers who do not care for their pupils beyond the College-hours, students who have not learnt to love and respect their teachers ; European professors who show their race-feelings, and who by word and deed are constantly reminding their pupils that they must not attempt to imitate their masters ; students do not feel sufficient confidence in their teachers to unbosom themselves to them, to acquaint them, with their moral perplexities, to seek their advice and sympathy in their boyish troubles and cares, and teachers never seem to take any interest in the private lives of their students. There is cold reserve on the one side, and fear on the other—the golden bond of sympathy which ought to exist between a young mind and his instructor does not exist, and thus the essential elements of a sound moral discipline—the loving and confiding disposition of the taught and the wise and sympathetic guidance of the teacher—are wanting. What is still worse is that there is no co-operation between parents and teachers in regard to the moral training of children. They do not socially meet, and consequently do not care much for each other. The teacher looks upon an Indian father as a superstitious Hindu or a fanatical Mohamedan, the Indian father looks upon him as an alien whose morality and religion are of no good. Instead of co-operating, both are rivals, each bent upon undoing the work of the other. The professor endeavours to cast out the old Adam and implant seeds of new moral and religious notions in the boy's mind ; the father—and here the mother also comes in to throw her weight into the scale—takes every pain to keep the young mind attached to its ancient moorings, while the tide of progress is rising higher and higher. This antagonism between their parents and teachers is the cause of the moral interregnum which has over taken Indian boys. If home influences are out of harmony with those of schools and Colleges, the life of those who are subject to them will

reflect this moral discord; and the character of our young men lacks fixity and consistency, because their moral selves have been cut into two halves—each incompatible with the other, each neutralising the effect of the other.

This, then, is the net result of the brief survey of the Education which our boys receive. It is a scientific age but our children grow up ignorant of Science; it is a commercial age but they do not know the elements of those branches of knowledge which are so essential to the development of industries, it is an era of 'tools and the man' yet their technical Education is of the poorest; the pressure of population is increasing, yet they do not know how to improve their existing resources; foreign competition is ruining the indigenous trade, yet they are prepared for no other career than those of the public service and the bar. On the other hand, much stress is laid upon their literary Education which nourishes the imaginative side of their intellect that hardly needs any further nourishment for the present; speculative knowledge is taught to them which while it muddles their understandings and makes them liable to the danger of taking words for facts, leaves them perfectly ignorant of the simplest phenomena of Nature. This is the intellectual equipment of our boys who have to fight the battle of life in the arena of modern civilisation, and when one thinks of the enormous amount of worthless matter with which their minds are stuffed one is reminded of Falstaff's bill and "the half-penny worth of bread to all that quantity of sack."

The usual aspect of the problem is equally discouraging and disappointing. New knowledge we are forcing upon the young generation, but new morality which ought to go along with it, is not taught. Religion is losing its hold, but no attempt is yet made to fill the void by any secular morality; old ideals are fading away one by one, but no fresh motives supplied for realising the larger hopes of the new time. At a time when courage, and endurance, and self-sacrifice are so ir-

gently needed for the reconstruction of Indian society, epicurianism has come and European luxury, but not the energy of the West, nor its pushing spirit of enterprise and adventure. In place of a character, cramped and narrow no doubt, but firm and simple, tried in the fires of primitive conflict and hammered on the anvil of fate, we have a character which shrinks from the slightest touch of pain, a soft, genteel arm-chair morality, a gelatinous humanity destitute of a back-bone. We want patriotism, and there is nothing in our training to make us patriotic; we have to compete with a people filled with an intense national spirit and there is little in our homes or in our schools to kindle in our hearts the flame of nationality; we have to battle with ignorance and superstition, to loosen the tightening bonds of custom and usage, which have for so many centuries clogged our progress and strangled our growth, but the strength of will is wanting and the firmness of purpose—an apostle's faith in the goodness of our mission, and a martyr's courage when the shadows of reverse may seem to darken its prospects, like "the clouds that gather round the setting sun."

It would thus appear that from the mental point of view, our present Education is *nill*, and that it is equally nill from the moral point of view. What can Indian parents, Indian Society, and Indian Government make out of such mental and moral stuff as is turned out every year by our Educational machine? The problem is a most curious one, fraught with an awful import to all parties concerned. It is the Sphinx riddle of modern India, which not to answer correctly is to be destroyed. The happiness of Indian homes, the progress and elevation of Indian society, the stability and security of Indian Government depend upon a wise and speedy solution of this problem. If we succeed, great will be our reward; but if we fail even the cause of civilization will fail, and a fatal blight fall upon the coming fortunes of one of the most capable sections of mankind.

## RELIGIOUS NEUTRALITY IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

It is generally admitted that the present Educational system is defective on the score of moral training ; and from time to time proposals have been put forward by competent authorities to remedy this defect. But they have all come to grief upon that rock of which it is so hard to steer clear for those who attempt to deal with our social questions—I mean, religion. In the question of moral training, it is asserted, is involved the question of religious instruction ; to teach morality without religion is to lay its foundations upon the shifting sands. But the Government is pledged to the principle of religious neutrality, and cannot upon obvious grounds of principle and policy depart from it. This consideration is for the present considered sufficient to decide the fate of a momentous problem, and the education of 200 million people is allowed to go on without any regard to its effects upon their moral growth and spiritual instincts.

But the question arises—and the importance of this question will, I venture to predict, grow with the growth of our knowledge—whether an education which is purely secular and scientific can be an unmixed blessing to a people who are pre-eminently religious—a people, whose morality, social usages, law, and every detail of private and public life are tinged with religion. Is it a question of mere speculative interest which practical politicians may pass by on the other side ? Is not an imperative duty of raising new pillars and mainstay of right conduct laid upon those who through their educational system have introduced elements of dissolution into the existing order ? Can the doctrine of religious neutrality shield the Government from the consequences of its policy ? To my mind these are important questions, and de-



mand a well-considered answer. I am sure I cannot furnish that answer ; but it is possible that the following observations may be of some use to those who can.

Without entering into the question whether religious training is or is not an indispensable ingredient of moral instruction, I may be allowed to remark that the religious neutrality of the Government in its present form is an utterly illogical and untenable position. There is a sense in which the Government is neutral so far as the religious persuasions of the people are concerned. It has given every body full liberty of thought and action. All religions are treated with equal regard and deference. In public schools and colleges religious instruction is entirely prohibited in order to avoid all risks of seeming partial to any particular creed. If private institutions undertake to impart religious teaching along with the general training required by the Universities, the Government does not interfere. We have missionary institutions which receive Government aid and teach the Bible. The teaching of Government schools is strictly secular and totally free from religious leanings. The object arrived at is to train the students' mental powers and to have them free to follow their own religion and morality. It is for parents, we are told, to take care of their childrens' morals and religion. This is the *rationale* of the religious neutrality doctrine, and to my mind it is very unsound.

The so-called religious neutrality is really the principle of active hostility to religion. We are of course concerned here with the popular religions of India ; and it can hardly be disputed that English education, specially in its higher stages, is antagonistic to most of their fundamental tenets. English literature, when it is not philosophic or scientific, is saturated with Biblical conceptions and bears the impress of Christianity. If this literature exercises any influence upon Indians, then it must generate in them prochristian biases by familiarising their minds with the moral and religious

ideals of Christianity. Now I say nothing as to the good or evil of this influence ; but surely that educational system can hardly claim to be neutral in religious matters which thus exposes the minds of Indian youths to the influences of a particular creed. And in English literature not only the high merits of Christianity are exalted, but those of other religions are treated with scant respect. From his childhood, a Hindu begins to hear good things of Christianity ; and by no means very edifying accounts of his own creed ; and such is the force of early impressions that when he grows up, he may—and generally does—remain a mechanical follower of his ancestral religion, yet he loses much of his religious sensitiveness, and not unfrequently becomes indifferent to all religions whatever.

On the other hand, when English literature is not theological, it is philosophic or scientific, and therefore in essence, sceptical. Modern science and philosophy are admittedly saturated with the spirit of Agnosticism, and even modern theology has not been able to escape its contagion. Poetry, which has always drawn so much of its inspiration from the fountain of religious faith has become tainted with the modern spirit which has found expression in the noble words of Tennyson :

“There lives more faith in honest doubt,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.”

There is not a single article of orthodox belief which has not been modified by the discoveries of Science. The constitution of nature, the appearance of man, the evolution of the starry heavens, the phenomena of birth, and dissolution in the animal world—all these things are accounted for in one way by Theology, and in a quite different and antagonistic way by Science ; and for the present it is Science which seems to carry conviction to the minds of most educated men.

Science has transformed the religious convictions of Europe where there are powerful agencies for fostering and keeping alive the spirit of religion. The influence of Science upon the religious beliefs of the Indian people may well be imagined when we consider that no systematic religious training exists in this country. The writings of Darwin, Lyell, Spencer, Tyndall, and Huxley have been made accessible to Indian youths. The favourite authors of our Universities are Mill, Hume, Bain, Locke, Butler, and Hamilton. Now with the exception of the last two, the rest are among the principal champions of freethought; and I doubt very much (in spite of the controversy recently revived by Mr Gladstone). The Nineteenth century Editor if Butler's line of thought has ever been favourable to the orthodox religious teacher. But so far as there is any religious element in his system, it is mixed up with his defence of Christianity against the attacks of the Deists and Free-thinkers of his time; while his ethical doctrines are purely rationalistic and have nothing to do with any form of religion whatever. The tendency of Mill and Bain is evidently agnostic; and the same may in a yet more unqualified sense be said of the latest school of psychology of whom Herbert Spencer is the acknowledged head.

Our Universities are bound to teach Science and Philosophy, and they must select the works either of the spiritualists or of the materialists. Attempts are from time to time made to maintain a sort of balance of power between the two opposite systems of thought, by selecting authors of both schools. If Mill's Utilitarianism is taught, side by side with it is also taught Calderwood's Moral Philosophy; and our educationists are persuaded that by thus mixing the black of orthodoxy with the white of free-thought, they can produce the neutral tints of secular ethics and natural Theology. But here their chemistry seems to be at fault. In the first place, the dog-

matic systems of European Philosophy, even when they are religious, are too rationalistic for the Indian mind. In the second place, the militant agnosticism of writers like Huxley and Spencer can hardly be checked by the learned ignorance of Calderwood or the aggravating verbosity of McCosh.

The doctrine of religious neutrality is thus a very misleading expression. The Government is not neutral—could not be neutral even if it would—so far as the influence of public instruction upon our religion is concerned. On the contrary, it is instrumental in undermining our spiritual convictions, without attempting to substitute for them any other ideals of human endeavour.

Let us glance at the moral consequences of the New Education. There are some gloomy natures who cannot see any good in modern civilization, and to whom, therefore, the introduction of western culture into India is like the bursting up of salt-springs in the valley of fruits. To those of an optimistic turn of mind the decay of superstition is in itself a positive good ; and in the gradual decomposition of our popular creeds under the influence of English Education, they seem to detect the possibilities of the future growth of a purer and more scientific moral creed. I am not for the present concerned to ascertain the truth of these two antagonistic opinions ; very likely there is an element of truth in both, with a considerable admixture of error. But there is one fact which is assumed by both, and it is with the real meaning and significance of that fact that I am here concerned. Both assume—the optimists and the pessimists alike—that English education is the great solvent of our religion and tradition ; that somehow or other, the young generation, considering its moral structure, is *not* like the old. This is a fact which he who runs may read ; but which nevertheless few of us can appreciate in all its bearings.

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How grave is the change which the Universities are working in India has not yet been sufficiently realised by most writers upon our social questions. To say that it is the greatest moral revolution—and in some respects, the most singular—that has ever taken place in history, is not a figure of speech but a solid, solemn fact. The rise of Buddhism is a most singular instance of religious reformation ; but in the beginning it never pretended to be anything more than a sort of reformed Hinduism—protestant Vedism against catholic Brahmanism—and its sudden success was due in a large measure to the conversion of some great Hindu rulers to its teachings, and to the help which it thus received of their moral *prestige* and physical might both of which, in its later development, it freely used in its proselytising career. Another great religion which within a few years swept over so many countries, and continents, like a fierce hurricane carrying everything before it, is Mohamedanism. But we all know that the sword has played a more prominent part in the career of Islam than moral persuasion. The growth and development of Christianity from very humble beginnings to its present form when it has become the creed of the most civilized nations of the West is one of the noblest chapters in the history of mankind ; yet it can hardly be denied that it failed to make any mark in the world until Constantine embraced it ; that the conversion of the great Emperor was, as society was then constituted, a prelude to the conversion of the best part of the Roman world ; that even then the assistance of the sword was not entirely dispensed with, and that after many persecutions and much bloodshed, Christianity became the religion of the Holy Roman Empire. Now, with regard to all these great religious revolutions—Buddhism, Christianity, Mohamedanism—it may be said that while the first never claimed to be a new religion, and as a matter of fact was only a form of Reformed Vedism, and the third was emphatically a military religion all the three had to resort to physical force to extend their influence, and were much

helped in their work by having on their side the arm of temporal power. But the revolution going on in India is unique in the annals of mankind. The spirit of English education is totally opposed to popular Hindnism. It is destroying one by one our objects of belief, and yet its object is not religious conversion. It is infecting every grade of Indian society, and yet it has no physical force at its back. Institutions that withstood seven centuries of Mohamedan influence, are crumbling away under its touch. Convictions which were proof against fire and sword are dissolving in the new light, as dissolved the wings of Icarus in the heat of the sun.

In order sufficiently to realise the gravity, the vastness, the sweeping character of the revolution, we must look at certain facts.

In India every thing wears a religious aspect. Take our indigenous history and geography, or poetry, literature, philosophy, or medicine, laws, politics, the mythical element is present everywhere. The most elementary kind of English Education dispels these illusions, and our boys begin to treat old things with unceremonious ridicule. Tradition loses its sway. Doubt is looked upon as a preliminary step and a valuable aid to the investigation of Truth ; and in matters of opinion, Reason, not authority, is the final court of appeal. I will not be far wrong in saying that the difference between the orthodox Hindu and the anglicised Hindu is not that the faith of the one is less rational than that of the other, but that while the former has a religion—true or false—the latter has none at all. He has given up his ancestral creed and has not yet adopted any other. He is utterly wanting in that religious sense which pervades the old generation, and he can hardly sympathise with that sentiment of piety and other-worldliness, which however faulty it may be in some of its extreme forms, is certainly among the noblest traits of humanity. Religious zeal has ceased to be an element in the nature of the young Hindu ; and when he



quarrels with a Mohamedan on any religious question, for instance, that of cow-killing, it is not on religious grounds but for some political or temporal considerations. "Modern times" says Matthew Arnold "find themselves with an immense system of institutions, established facts, accredited dogmas, customs, rules, which have come to them from times not modern. In this system their life has to be carried forward and yet they have a sense that this system is not of their own creation, that it by no means corresponds exactly with the wants of their actual life, that, for them, it is customary not rational. The awakening of this sense is the awakening of the modern spirit." And English Education has awakened this sense in the young generation.

Of course, all this applies to a very small fringe of the population. The masses are still immersed in darkness ; only a small section that has imbibed western knowledge has drifted away from its ancient moorings. But the youths of a nation are the trustees of posterity. If, as Emerson says, men walk as prophecies of the next age, the young generation is certainly the prophecy, the prediction of the succeeding generation. It foreshadows the destiny of the coming race. However small may be the number of those who have received European influences, they indicate without doubt, the direction which the national mind of India is bound to take, soon or late. We are therefore justified in saying that the decay of faith in the young generation of India is a phenomenon that affects the moral prospects of the whole nation both in the present and in the future. Wide and deep is the gulf which separates the young from the old generation ; and when I picture to my mind the moral consequences of this spiritual anarchy upon some of those institutions and beliefs without which no civilized society can long hold together, I cannot help thinking that in India where a violent ferment has set in, and all sorts of physical and spiritual forces are contending for mastery, the new Education which has destroyed,

or nearly destroyed the religious sense,—the chief bond of social cohesion,—must substitute for it some new cohesive and constructive force, if the whole social fabric is not going to burst into chaos. In order to make my meaning quite clear, I shall take one or two concrete instances of the influence of the present anarchy upon our social system.

First : the decay of faith must tend to the dissolution of our family system which is based upon the idea of ancestor-worship. The belief is that ties of duty and obligation continue to subsist between the living and the dead, and the capacity of each member of the family to perform them determines his share in the ancestral property. The law of inheritance has thus a decidedly spiritual basis. Women, as a rule, do not inherit, because they are not thought fit to discharge certain obligations towards their departed relations. The eldest male member is the head of the family, and is bound by the strongest religious injunctions to take under his roof his poor and needy relations. Family not individual, is the unit of society, and obedience to the *pater familias* is the highest duty imposed upon the whole household. But when the belief in Hinduism disappears, with it also disappears all belief in the spiritual foundation of the family-system. The authority of the patriarch is detested like despotism ; the law of inheritance is felt as an anomaly and an injustice ; domestic charity loses its chief incentive. It is no wonder if young men are charged with irreverence, with fickle and feeble domestic attachments, and with being somewhat hollow and hard-hearted in their dealings with their relations. The charge is just, and they have certainly deteriorated in most of those domestic virtues which shine in the character of the old generation. The religious incentive to private charity has perished before any secular regard for the public weal has sprung up, and we have a generation of young men the main-spring of whose conduct is selfishness, unredeemed by any sentiment of rational ambition.

Secondly : the political sentiment has been equally affected by the change. Loyalty to rulers has always been one of the most marked traits of the Asiatic character; and as we have always believed in the divine right of kings, loyalty to our Rajas has been inculcated upon us as a religious duty. Through centuries of social discipline it has become an inherited virtue of the race. This sentiment is a great element of social consolidation ; and so long as a nation has not passed from the stage of compulsory co-operation to that of voluntary co operation (to use Herbert Spencer's expressive phrase) it renders an invaluable service to the cause of order and good Government. When civilization advances, when men learn to act in concert, when social opinion becomes a power, when an enlightened self-interest teaches men to strive for social welfare without the coercion of any external agency, when, in short, rising on the stepping stone of his dead self to higher things, the individual begins to live and move and have his being in the corporate life of the national aggregate, then the time is come when the sentiment of loyalty may give place to the wider and nobler sentiment of Humanity which a great philosopher has raised to the dignity of a religion. But so long as this stage is not reached, Loyalty is one of the essentials of social stability, and anything which tends to weaken it, weakens the chances of good Government. Now the spirit of secularity is not favourable to belief in the divine right of kings to which the sentiment of loyalty has hitherto adhered. The present Government is one to which we do not feel ourselves bound by any religious ties; and to the growth of purely secular ties, the alien character of the governing race, its isolated position, its strange civilization, its inability to identify its interest with ours have presented an insuperable obstacle. We can be loyal to the British government either because it is our religious duty, or because it serves our worldly interest. Religious

duty is out of the question in relation to the English people. The purely human foundation of loyalty is also wanting, because many favourable chances must combine before a people can be whole-heartedly loyal to a foreign government; and because the democratic sentiment which has been introduced into our political life is opposed to all forms of despotism; and the present government is despotism, whatever may be its other merits.

Thirdly: upon the social morality of the Hindus the effect of English Education—or of the secular spirit as a result of that Education—is apparent. The roots of our morality lie deep down in our religion. If the foundation is sapped, the superstructure cannot be expected to stand long. Whether morality can be divorced from religion is a question which has during the last quarter of the present century been much debated in Europe; and the religious party still holds, not without some reason, that the experiment of a purely secular morality has not yet been tried, and that the morality of the best agnostics and free-thinkers has been nursed under Christian influences and amid religious associations. In this country even the idea of secular Ethics is unknown. Religion is the chief guide and motive principle both in private and public life. The influence upon our morality of the decline of religious belief has, therefore, been remarkable. Social rules have ceased to be respected because they have lost their religious sanction. As a rule, men do not respect the morality of those whose religion they despise; and now that the young generation has parted with its ancestral creed, it is not likely to care much for the code of morals which is closely interwoven with that creed. What the Indian youth wants is something secular, positive, human, removed from the sphere of the supernatural; what he finds in the current morality is sacerdotal, supernatural, mystic. His mind naturally recoils from it, and leads him either openly

to discard all social restraints, or to smooth the friction of dissent by playing the hypocrite and seeming what he is not.

These, in brief, are a few of the consequences of the decline of religious belief among Indian youths who have been brought up under the shadow of our great Universities. The principle of religious neutrality has been consistently observed, but unhappily its results have been disastrous. I do not suggest for one moment that the Government has been wrong in adopting this principle; on the contrary, it has been, I am inclined to think, very wise in doing what it has done. My complaint is that it has half done its work. In the religious and moral sphere its work has, in the main, been destructive, not constructive; and it cannot clear itself from the responsibility of the situation. I have shown that neutral in religious matters our Educational system cannot be; and there are historical analogies which point to a very gloomy future for this country.

During the middle of the 18th century free thought and atheistic notions suddenly spread throughout France and infected every grade of society. The influence of the Catholic Church suddenly declined, and even the masses imbibed something of the sceptical spirit of the Encyclopædists. Social conventionalities came to be honoured more in their breach than in their observance, and atheism became the fashion of the day. Voltaire was called a bigot by the French *Philosophe* because he was a deist. The decline of religious belief gave birth to such an outburst of immorality in the French society of the time, that in order to find anything like it, we must go back to the worst days of the Roman Empire. At last, the Revolution came like the crack of doom, and the old order passed away never to return.

A study of the Russian Nihilists would show that a high intellectual Education, when not counter-balanced by adequate moral and social checks, is one of the most powerful explosives that can be applied to the destruction of human society. The Nihilists are generally those who have received University Education, but whose parents are still immersed in ignorance and religious prejudice. These young men imbibe the emancipating and liberalising influences of culture, and come to treat their elders with marked contempt, as they really find them little removed from barbarism. They hate their ancestral occupations and give up their ancestral creed. "The ideas of family ties and the obligations of married life which prevail in the homes of the students are probably lax enough, but even these are cast to the wind by the young men and women who adopt a code of morals of their own in the Bohemian society of which they have become members. Parental authority, which a few years ago was such a marked feature in domestic life in Russia has become a thing of the past, as far as regards the majority of the students, and University and Government officials are equally condemned. The mystic reverence for the Czar appears absurd to the young philosophers, and the Church itself is despised by those who have learnt to recognise the ignorance of its ministers, and the superstition with which its rites are practised by the ignorant masses." (Fortnightly Review, April 1882).

A good deal of this description applies to Indian youths who have received English education; and to my mind there is a marked resemblance between the causes which have given birth to Nihilism in Russia, and those which are at the basis of our own spiritual anarchy. In India, as in Russia, intellectual progress has outstripped moral progress, and the bonds of religion and tradition have been too abruptly snapt in twain. Hence it is that here, as there, we have a genera-

tion of youngmen who have no land mark on earth and no loadstar in heaven, who have no religious convictions, no fixed moral principles, no well-defined ideals of conduct.

There is no wonder, then if Indian parents to whom the one-sided education of their children has brought so much disappointment, turn round in bitterness and indignation to the Government, and complain, as they are complaining now. 'You have taught our children science and philosophy; you have unrolled before their eyes the ample page of history, rich with the spoils of time—not only such as are recorded in the annals of mankind, but such as are written in letters of flame above, and in the strata of the earth beneath; you call this civilization and are proud of having communicated its impact to India. But are you aware what mischief you are unwillingly doing us? Your scientific education has made our children irreligious, atheistic, agnostic; they are beginning to look upon religion as (what one of your clever writers called it the other day) 'a dream of hysterical women and half-starved men'; they no longer believe in the divine source of virtue, but think that it is a proper balancing of profit and loss; they have become irreverent, disobedient, disloyal; they have lost all fixity of character; they are too ready to act on the first prompting of passion and interest and call it independence; they boast that they have adopted the Epicurean precept 'eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die, and become carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, and laugh at us, old men, for what they mockingly call our ante-diluvian notions. Surely the Iron age has come, for it has been said that when it comes, knowledge will be more and more, but wisdom will be less and less. And that you, Englishmen, should be the leaders of such an age is quite in accordance with the fitness of things. You say you have given us light, but your light is worse than darkness. We do not thank you for it. Better far that our children should remain

ignorant of your sciences, but retain the simple faith of their ancestors, than that they should know all the *ologies* of the day but turn their back upon religion and morality as mere rags and remnants of a superstitious age.'

Whether we agree or not with this complaint, which sounds ever and anon through the pæans of joy sung over the diffusion of European civilization in India, like a passing bell across a marriage feast, it cannot fail to arouse in us a deep tragic interest in the death of the old *regime* that must cause disquietude, discomfort, and unhappiness to millions on millions of men. There is no more tragic event under the sun than the death of a nation, and this consists in the destruction of beliefs and institutions and national peculiarities that give it an individual character. This awful tragedy is now going on in India. The old religion is dying; the old morality is dying; the bonds of custom and tradition which are the bones and sinews of the social organism are dissolving; there is death and decomposition all round. For all this the secular spirit of the Educational system is responsible. The crisis is serious; the destiny of a nation is at stake. Mere let-aloneist attitude will not do; something must be done to replace that which is passing away. If an attempt is made to face the crisis with boldness, with promptitude, and in right earnest well and good, if not, matters will have become still more hopeless, the reins will have been thrown upon the necks of the horses, and the last hope of reform without revolution will be gone.

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## THE DECAY OF GENIUS IN MODERN INDIA.

### I.

Pope, who was not only a great poet, but a great moralist of the eighteenth century, says somewhere :—

“ We think our fathers fools so wise we grow ;

Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.”

These lines exactly express what I think is soon becoming, if it is not already become, the attitude of young Indians towards the past of their country ; only it is a question if they think their fathers fools, because they are wise, or,—*otherwise* English education which is responsible for much that is both good and evil in their tendencies has had such prejudiced and passionate detractors, in its infancy, that by a law of compensation which governs all human affairs, it has now when it has come of age come to possess a host of equally prejudiced and passionate eulogists who see nothing in the new order but an unmitigated good supplanting the unmitigated evil of the old, and to whom therefore the present is as full of wisdom as the past was full of folly. They moralise with the poet Pope ; but it is doubtful if the idea of their own perfection leaves any room in their minds for the suspicion lest their wiser sons may come to take a somewhat different view of their mental and moral pretensions. Anyhow it is a happy generation which considers itself wiser than its predecessors. There are many things favourable to this belief. The Indian youth lives in an age of gas and electricity and steam-engine. He is familiar with the marvels of science which his ancestors never knew. His reading is various. His knowledge of geography, history, mathematics and science is far superior to that of his predecessors. His information is wider and

more varied. He has cast off most of the superstitions of his elders. He has come to recognise the folly of most of those notions and traditions which form the warp and woof of the orthodox Hindu's existence.

In social matters he is a free-lance, ready to strike at every body. There is no custom which is sacred to him, no belief which is entitled to his deference. Compromise he knows not ; living in the cloud-castle of his own conceit he regrets, with the famous sage, that God did not consult him or else what a charming place this world might have been.

In politics his fluent tongue and fluent pen are given full licence, and he naturally thinks that he is an altogether more civilized being than the old-fashioned Indian, because unlike him who cringes and crawls before the official, he openly attacks and abuses the powers that be and is yet none the worse for it. He has entered upon a political crusade and cherishes the dream of a united India ; while the old-fashioned Indian is a creature of caste and sect, and has never known the idea of political liberty. He can address large political gatherings and he fancies he possesses certain practical energy of which the old generation is destitute.

He compares himself with his elders in knowledge, in the liberty of thought and action, in the freedom with which he is ready to deal with social matters, in the energy with which he fights the political battle ; and he finds that in all these respects he stands on a higher ground, and breathes a freer air. The thought must occur to him that if he is really more educated than his elders, freer in thought and action, possessing ideas more in harmony with the spirit of the age, then he must be wiser than they—a more highly evolved man. both in intellect and in character—a decided advance upon the preceding race, foreshadowing in his mental and moral activities the higher ideals of the coming age. The dominan

mood of the majority of Indian youths is, as I have briefly described here, and the question arises as to how far it is justified by the actual results of the new civilization in India.

Now there is no doubt that the India of to-day is a decided improvement upon the India of yesterday. Popular education, as we see it, is entirely of modern growth, and in its train has come a general diffusion of intelligence over a wider surface of Indian society than was the case before. The total amount of average ability has perceptibly increased in the country, and the struggle for existence has to be carried on under conditions which are peculiarly favourable to a high level of general culture among the people. Social and political liberty has come, with democratic longings and aspirations; and this, while it has raised and purified our sense of self-respect, has in a measure helped to break down those barriers of caste and hereditary privilege that have for centuries strangled our growth and arrested our civilization. There is more rationalism, more practicalness in the thoughts of the younger than in those of the old generation. There is a keener appreciation of interests which transcend sectional lines, more public spirit, more mental unrest, more spiritual ferment. All this we see in modern India and gratefully acknowledge as the direct result of English influence. But the question arises—and considering its suggestiveness and its bearings upon so many matters of vital importance it is a most interesting question—that if in India the amount of average ability is greater, the level of popular culture higher, and social and political conditions more favourable to enlightenment now than before, is the quantity of genius, both speculative and active, greater in the English-taught generations than it was in their predecessors? Culture is not the same thing as genius of which the distinctive marks are creation and originality. It may be conceded that originality is not always genius, but genius is

always originality; the circumstances which are favourable to the diffusion of popular culture are generally favourable to it also, but not always; hence sometimes we find nations far advanced in general education but wanting in genius, while on the other hand there have been nations who were backward in popular culture, but who possessed the divine spark of genius that has lighted up their history for all time. Nevertheless a country of popular freedom and popular culture offers a better ground for the growth and development of genius than an ignorant and ill-governed country; and if such a country does not display an adequate amount of genius, the fault must lie in its institutions and in the national disposition of its people. India seems to me a country in which in spite of popular education and many other improvements in social and political conditions, genius, by which I mean the power of origination and creation in thought and of daring initiative in action, the 'vision and the faculty divine' which makes its possessor think thoughts and do deeds to which the present is seldom just, but which can only be properly appreciated in the long result of time—is not only not growing as fast as might be expected but decaying; the Indian mind shows less capacity for creative effort in any department of human activity than it ever did before. Some would, doubtless, demur to this proposition, and it may, therefore, be well to discuss it at some length in the following pages.

I begin first with the testimonies of those Educationists and Statesmen who have had the best opportunities of forming an opinion as to the mental advance made by the people of this country under the British rule. The Education Commissioners say:—

"An estimate of the effect which collegiate instruction has had upon the general education and enlightenment of the people must in fairness be accompanied by a reference to the

objects which it set before itself. The Reformers of 1835 to whom the system is due, claimed that only by an education in English, and after European methods, could we hope to raise the moral and intellectual tone of Indian society and supply the administration with a competent body of public servants. To what degree, then have these objects been attained? Our answer is in the testimony of witnesses before this Commission in the thoughtful opinions delivered from time to time by men whose position has given them ample opportunities of judging, and in the facts obvious to all eyes throughout the country. And that answer is conclusive: if not that collegiate education has fulfilled all the expectations entertained of it, at least that it has not disappointed the hopes of a sober judgment. Many mistakes in the methods employed have been pointed out and corrected by maturer experience. Much done has had to be undone. Not a little remains for gradual reconsideration. So, too, of the recipients of our college education, it is by no means pretended that they are the very crown and flower of Indian society. Many unlovely defects of character still give occasion of scorn to those who are nothing if not critical of superficial learning, and pretentious self-assertion manifested in a variety of ways, there has no doubt been plenty. It would be strange if it were otherwise. For in no country under any circumstance has there been equal or similar encouragement to the development of such and other faults. The surroundings of the Indian student are not always favourable to the development of a high type of character.\* Neither in the labour nor in the recreation of those about him does he find much that sorts with his intellectual pursuits. Living in an atmosphere of ignorance, his sense of superiority is in danger of becoming conceit. Reverence for the current forms of the religion of his country seem difficult to him, when face to face with dogmas which science has exploded, and a disposition to scoff does not beautify his nature. The narrow circle of his life; the absence

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\* A very vivid description is to be found in the Sadler Report. *Editor.*

of facilities for travel, whereby his sympathies and experience might be enlarged; the strong temptation to lay aside his studies so soon as employment supplies his moderate necessities; the scanty inducement to fit himself for higher duties—all help to dwarf the moral and intellectual growth and to foster those faults against which satirists, good-humoured or bitter, have directed so many shafts.”

Further on they say :—

“There is yet another respect, of a different and more special character, in which collegiate education has as yet certainly failed. With a few brilliant exceptions, no eminent scholars are to be found in the long list of University graduates.”

Sir Charles Turner’s opinion is a little more flattering :—

“Modern India has proved by examples that are known to, and honoured by, all in this assembly that her sons can qualify themselves to hold their own with the best of European talent in the Council Chamber, on the Bench, at the Bar, in the mart. The time cannot be far distant, when she will produce her philosopher, her moralist, her reformer.” The Education Commissioners looked upon this as no more than “a far-off adorable dream;” anyhow it referred to an uncertain future and not to the actual present.

Sir Monier Williams, who has an intimate knowledge of Indians, both because of his connection with the Oxford University, and because he has studied the Indian intellect as it is preserved in our ancient literature, and as it is displayed in actual life in this country, has come to a conclusion which cannot be very flattering to our national vanity. He says :—

“In traversing India from north to south, from east to west, I visited many High Schools, examined many classes, conversed with many Indians under education at our colleges, and was brought into contact with a large number who had

passed the University Matriculation examination, as well as with a few who had taken their degrees, and earned distinction for high proficiency. I certainly met some really well-educated men, who by their character and acquirements were fitted to fill any office or shine in any society. But in plain truth, I was not always favourably impressed with the general results of our higher educational efforts, I came across a few well-informed men, many half-informed men, and a great many ill-informed and ill-formed men—men, I mean without true strength of character and with ill-balanced minds. Such men may have read a great deal, but if they think at all, think loosely. Many are great talkers. They may be said to suffer from attacks of verbal diarrhoea, and generally talk plausibly but with inaccuracy. They are not given to much sustained exertion. Or if such men act at all, they act as if guided by no settled principles, and as if wholly irresponsible for their spoken and written words. They neglect their own languages, disregard their own literatures, abjure their own religions, despise their own philosophies, break their own caste-rules, and deride their own time-honored customs, without becoming good English scholars, honest sceptics, wise thinkers, earnest Christians or loyal subjects of the British Empire.”

It would appear that the foregoing expressions of opinion, however favourable to us so far as a general rise in the tone of our average ability is concerned, are unanimous upon the point that English education has failed hitherto to stimulate any profound scholarship or evoke any original thought in the national mind of India. In other words, when English education has given us a host of practical men, ready writers and fluent speakers, efficient public servants and an intelligent press, it has not yet given us our philosophers, our moralists, our reformers. And a cursory survey of the intellectual activity would seem to confirm the testimonies I have just cited.

Much cannot be expected from modern Indians in the sphere of science, because their scientific training is of a very imperfect type. The Calcutta University did not encourage it in her earlier days; and the Allahabad University does not, even in the last days of the nineteenth century, seem much inclined to promote scientific culture. Its bifurcation of studies may seem favourable to science by enabling students to specialise their studies; but it has brought its scheme to such a low level, that instead of affording encouragement and facility to the progress of scientific education, it has given full scope to our young men, who are naturally averse to the severe scientific discipline, and whose social and political surroundings are peculiarly favourable to mere literary pursuits, to follow the bent of their own mind at a period of their lives when they can hardly be said to have any mind at all. But this by the way. The fact of the matter is that English education began with a particular object, and the attainment of that object did not necessarily need a scientific training. Besides the object of civilizing India, the main object of the early educationists was to train up a class of capable public servants. A peculiar stamp was fixed upon our education by this dominant note of the educational policy of the Government, and those branches of knowledge were encouraged which were of the most practical and immediate use to the administration. Literary training consequently assumed undue proportions, and scientific culture was left to starve. The Public Education of the country has not yet lost this feature, although it has of late undergone considerable modification. I am fully aware that even this defective system has produced a few brilliant students of Mathematics and Physics, but surely no one would rank them even with European scholars of second-rate scientific reputation. And yet there is no reason why India should not have in the course of a century of British rule produced first class Mathematicians. Physical sciences may be the special property



of Europe, and in the absence of laboratories and facilities for experiment, it may have been difficult for Indians to do any solid work in that line; but the science of Mathematics is of native origin; at one time it was highly cultivated, our Astronomy and Arithmetic have travelled round the world; we have a genius for it, in it we ought to shine; and yet even in this branch of knowledge, capable of being pursued with such simple methods and appliances and particularly congenial to our nature, we have done nothing worthy of an intellectual race, if not equal to what has been done by our less favourably situated predecessors.

In philosophy, ethics and sociology we are equally backward. Not only is there no original work, but no expository or critical work done by any Indian in these departments of thought during the last hundred years. No Indian graduate has written anything on philosophy or the moral and social sciences which any European scholar would like to take into his serious consideration. It may be said that it is not the Indians of this century only who have displayed this mental sterility, but that for at least five hundred years India has produced nothing worthy of her eminence in the higher department of thought. It is true that the decadence of the Indian mind commenced long ago; but I will show later on that it was never so torpid as it is now; and that if it did not make any brilliant achievements in the sphere of speculation, it was true to the spirit of the age, and asserted itself in those matters which were then among the most vital requirements of the nation. On the contrary we are living in an era of peace and progress; literary pursuits are at a premium; the national intellect has suddenly come in contact with a vast amount of strange unsuspected knowledge—very much like what occurred in Europe when the revival of learning opened before the European mind the long-hidden treasures of the wisdom of Athens and Rome—and along with this knowledge has come an amount of social and political

liberty of which the men of the Renaissance had no idea. The Indian mind has been deeply stirred; its interest in intellectual efforts has increased a hundred-fold; many fields have been opened to it for its free and fearless exercise, and yet it has produced not a single work of any philosophic worth, nor, having failed in creative effort, has it given any promise of success in what is only next to genius, namely in learning and assimilating, systematising and organising the thoughts of other minds so as to convert them into its own mental fibres and thus make it part and parcel of our national life.

History, politics, Law and Theology are the branches of learning in which Indians may reasonably be expected to do something. The materials of Indian history must lie in our literature which is so easily accessible to us, and which we can so easily learn. Politics are present history, and for the present of the most absorbing interest to the best minds of India. The political spirit has most deeply affected the educated classes, and the largest amount of their mental energy is expended in political writing. Law is another occupation which is most congenial to our nature and we have a large number of highly cultivated men devoting themselves both to its practice and its philosophy. Specially in the special laws of the country they ought, for obvious reasons, to be very eminent, as no doubt some of them are. In Theology they have special advantages over Europeans, and they ought to be able to produce works of European reputation. But what have the Indians done in these branches of learning? Little, I am afraid, of which we can be proud.

There is no history of India by an Indian historian which a third-rate European scholar would not have written. Mr. R. C. Dutt's *History of Ancient India* is an interesting and even an instructive work. It reflects a great credit upon the gentleman who in the midst of his official duties could get time to write it. But it must be confessed—and it is no disparagement to the author—that the book cannot be looked upon as

one of the most brilliant efforts of the modern Indian intellect, and that there is little in the presentation of facts which would strike any one as novel or as governed by any profound philosophic conception. From an Indian historian we want not only a simple narration of facts, but their interpretation, because he more than any foreigner ought to be able to solve the riddles of our national life as it is unfolded in history and to deduce from their answers useful lesson for our guidance in the future. Dr. Rajender Lal Mitter was doubtless a profound scholar, and whatever may be said as regards his actual achievements in the field of our ancient history and antiquarian research, the method which he pursued was scientific. Still it is doubtful if even he has produced anything which posterity will not willingly let die.\*

The case of politics is not much better. I am not aware of any classical book on politics by any Indian writer. There are certainly a good many essays and books dealing more or less with political topics; and there is nothing wonderful in this, considering that the very best minds in the country are devoted to politics in some form or other. But no work on Indian politics by an Indian politician which would be read with any other than antiquarian interest twenty years hence, or which would give us a juster and better idea of our political problems than can be gathered from the works of Englishmen does exist in this country. Mr. Syed Mahmud has written a remarkable History of Education in India, and it is one of the few books from the pen of the Indians that will not lose their value for many a day. But the greatest admirer of Mr. Mahmud would not call that book a work of genius, elaborate and instructive as it is. Mr. Mahmud shows great powers of selection, compilation and effective presentation of facts scattered over a vast area; but of his own mind we see little in the book; questions of the profoundest interest pass before him without moving his

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\* This is still painfully true. *Editor.*

curiosity ; some of the most vital problems are suggested, but no attempt is made to solve them, or at any rate to indicate the possible lines along which their solutions may be sought. He moved in the midst of most interesting facts in the mental history of his country, but he took no notice of them ; they touched him, he brushed them ; they were close to him, he passed them by. Mr. Mahmud's History is a signal instance of our deficiency in speculative genius even in regard to subjects upon which we have every inducement to speak forth our real mind.

A considerable amount of our political ability displays itself in speech—and I may be referred to Indian oratory as one of the undoubted manifestations of Indian genius. By far the greatest orator of our time was Keshub Chunder Sen ;\* and although not political, yet his oratory was of a very high order, and I am sure that the verdict of his contemporaries that he was a man of real genius—a born orator—will be affirmed by posterity. Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee and Mr. Lal Mohan Ghosh are great orators—indeed there is no one else in India who can at all be compared to them. But has their oratory the ring of genius in it ? Is in any of their speeches a single grand thought grandly expressed ? Who would care to read Mr. Banerjee's speeches ten years hence ? There is a great deal of cleverness, much patriotic fire and fervour ; but little inspiration. Neither as writers nor as speakers, it seems me, has our political life produced men who can by any stretch of language be called men of genius.

In Law, Indians have distinguished themselves both on the bench and at the bar, still it would be difficult to prove that even in this department in which they have many natural and accidental advantages over Englishmen, they have displayed any considerable speculative originality. Indian lawyers have written excellent treatises on law, as judges and barristers

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\* He alone can stand the rigorous test laid down in Lord Curzon's *Modern Parliamentary Eloquence*. Editor.

they have held their own against some of the cleverest Englishmen who have come out to India, and count among themselves one or two men of real genius. Dwarka Nath Mitter and Syed Mahmud are great names in the roll of Indian jurists—and when we refer to them we touch the high-water mark of Indian intellect in the sphere of law. And yet judged by the European standard where do they stand—not certainly as judges, but as students of the philosophy of Law? A man of genius like Sir Henry Maine enriches the science of historical jurisprudence with the results of his study of our laws and legal institutions, and gives to the world ‘Ancient Law’ and ‘The Village Communities’; a less original man than Sir Henry Maine, Sir James Stephens gives us the Criminal Procedure Code and the Evidence Act; while our Penal Code remains a lasting monument of Lord Macaulay’s powers. It is not contended that modern Indian intellect is equal to modern European intellect, and even in England there are not many men like Macaulay or Maine. But surely with the advantages which we have in studying our ideas and institutions, and considering that the best part of our intellectual vigour is devoted to the study and practice of Law, it is not unreasonable to expect that we should at least be able to produce something of solid and lasting worth in connection with our national jurisprudence—if not comparable to the great work of Maine, at any rate such as may command the respect of competent European scholars. That there are a few such works I at once admit; still the actual results fall far short of the expectations of considerate judgment.

India has a peculiar genius for Theology in which her achievements have been the greatest. Ram Mohan Roy, Keshub Chunder Sen, and Swami Dayanand are among the greatest Indian religious teachers of this century. The first two are the genuine products of English influence; but Dayanand’s genius, apart from the fact that it derived its stimulus from the general stir and unrest of the Indian mind, and was

helped and aided in its development by the spirit of the age, did not owe much to Western culture, and the English educational system cannot take credit for having produced it. Ram Mohan Roy did his work long before the birth of the Universities; and even Keshub was not a University man. While the intellects of these great men were moulded by the teachings and influences of the West—and in this they were the products of English civilisation—the direct influence of collegiate education counts for little in their lives. I can hardly find a man of genius even in Theology that the Indian Universities have yet been able to give to the world.

The thought often arises in my mind that although in the physical sciences, in the mental and moral sciences, in jurisprudence and the philosophy of politics, the Europeans have been making so very rapid strides while for various social and political causes we have stood still that for many a year to come the greatest function of the Indian intellect in these branches of knowledge will not be origination so much as assimilation and dissemination, the adaptation of modern ideas to our peculiar needs and the facilitating of their diffusion by making them acceptable to the popular mind; yet there are fields of knowledge which have not yet been exhausted by European research, and which are capable of yielding a rich harvest to a patient and energetic worker. Our indigenous civilisation, our social and religious institutions and beliefs, our customs and usages, the changes which are taking place now in every sphere of our national life under the impact of European civilisation, the evolution of a new social order out of the chaos of the past few centuries, the probable effect upon the future of this country of the silent pressure of the great spiritual upheaval observable everywhere—these are topics interesting and stimulating in the highest degree to every thinking mind, and a great deal of original thought is waiting to be produced in connection with them. Upon these topics Indians ought to have been able to throw some light by their own indepen-

dent thought and observation; and there can be no greater and more unmistakable proof of the poverty and sterility of the Indian intellect than that in subjects not yet thoroughly threshed out by European scholars and which it has peculiar advantage of studying and comprehending, it has not done half as much as has been done by European writers and thinkers, and of what little it has done more than half has been borrowed from European scholarship.\* For the study of our ancient literature and civilisation we have to go to Max-Muller and Deussen; for the philosophy of our law and legal institution to Sir Henry Maine; and for instruction upon the workings of civilization in modern India to the thoughtful essays of Sir William Hunter and Sir Alfred Lyall. There are few Indian thinkers whose guidance we seek in the study of the great problems of ancient and modern India. The writings of Hunter and Lyall are not the writings of the highest order of intellect, but even these can hardly be matched with any thing written by the greatest scholars of the Indian Universities. To my mind this is a certain proof of the decadence of Indian genius in the department of serious thought, and the greatest condemnation of the educational system as it has worked during the last fifty years.

It is true that we can hardly form a correct estimate of Indian genius in a foreign garb, and the decline of intellectual vigour in the department of literature may in a measure be attributed to the practice common among our literary men of publishing their thoughts in the English language. The practical usefulness of English is obvious, and the spread of taste for English composition is under the new social and political conditions, inevitable; but then certain consequences which must follow upon the adoption of a foreign tongue as the principal circulating medium of our thoughts, are also inevitable. A certain amount of mental energy is expended

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\* At a certain seat of learning plagiarism has in recent times been rampant—*Editor.*

in the acquisition of a foreign tongue; even then so few can really master it that most of those who attempt to write it, find that they have to work under serious limitations and even disqualifications; the constant struggle with the difficulties of the language cramps and cripples the thought: and thus what is gained by general culture is lost to mental originality. Light literature forms the bulk of the literary activity of every nation, and the graces of style are the very breath of light literature. It is, therefore, natural that Indian writers should take so much pains with their style; and that an ambitious zeal for fine diction in a foreign language should tell seriously upon the brooding and meditative habit of the mind. Serious as is this aspect of the diffusion of English in India, there are reasons to believe that the evil is short-lived, and the good resulting from it would in the long run outweigh the evil. English is the language of civilization, and even to speak a civilized language cannot fail to have an elevating and refining effect upon the mind. When those causes have been combated which have brought about our intellectual decadence, the accident of the English tongue as the chief medium of thought in the country will not be found any bar or hindrance to the full development of our native genius. If Bacon and Newton and Spinoza wrote their greatest works in Latin, at a time when the vernacular literature of England and Germany was richer than is our own, we may be permitted to hold that the greatest thoughts may be given in a foreign tongue, if the conditions of national life are otherwise favourable to the production of such thoughts. Still it can hardly be doubted that the necessity of acquiring a foreign tongue—particularly when that tongue is the chief passport to honour and fame—is a disturbing element in its beginning, in the normal growth of indigenous genius. Although the study of classical learning did much to stimulate the progress of knowledge in Europe, yet all competent historians are agreed that without the growth and development of vernacular tongues in different parts of Europe,



which followed upon the decay of the Latin language at the commencement of the Middle Ages, a general elevation of the masses to a higher level of intelligence would have been next to impossible, and that so long as the exclusive pursuit of the classical studies by a small privileged class lasted, European scholars produced little of any consequence.\*

Something like what took place in Europe during the 12th and 13th centuries, is discernible in India. The analogy is not exact; but in some respects it is very striking. The origin of our vernacular dialects lies several centuries back; but it is only in this century that most of them have come to possess any literature of their own. Like the new languages that sprang out of the corruption of Latin, our dialects in the early part of the century show a tending towards metrical composition, and the subjects with which they are occupied are very similar to those which occupied the Provençal Troubadours and the Norman Romancers although the religious element is more prominent here than in the mediæval literature of Europe. As in the beginnings of modern European literature, so here we have more poetry than prose. There is no national spirit in the growing literature. And as in Italy in spite of the struggles of her republics against the Emperors, no patriotic sentiment inspired any poet of the times, but on the contrary the Lombard poets became troubadours and sang Provençal love songs at the Courts of princes; so in India when at the dawn of the century, the Mogal power broken down by the Mahrattas on one side, and by the English on the other, was no more than (to parody a famous phrase of Hobbes) the ghost of the old Mogul Empire sitting on the grave thereof, when India was in the throes of a mighty convulsion, and when, if at any time, the national spirit, or at any rate the clannish and sectarian sentiments ought to have agitated the Indian mind, we find poets and writers devoting them-

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\* Hallam's Middle Ages,

selves to writing frivolous prose or composing frivolous love songs, under the patronage of fast vanishing principalities and powers. But the impetus which English civilization has in this respect given to the growth of our vernacular dialects, has been very remarkable. It has inspired it with new ideas and furnished it with new aims and ideals. The poetry and prose of fifty years ago are even now becoming obsolete, not in point of style so much perhaps as in point of ideas and sentiments. It may, therefore, be of some interest to ascertain as to how far native genius has yet been able to assert itself in its vernacular tongues.

Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, and Goormukhi are among the principal dialects of India on this side of the Vindia range. In Goormukhi there is hardly anything worth the name of literature; nor is it the dialect of a literary people. But the Bengali, Hindi, and Urdu languages are rich in prose and poetry, and are the languages of literary classes. Bengali and Hindi are the direct descendants—degenerate descendants no doubt—of Sanskrit, and possess in the opinion of competent authorities far better literary material, both imaginative and serious than the Urdu tongue, which is of more recent origin than its two sisters, and is a mixture in the main of Hindi, Persian and Arabic. But with regard to Urdu, it may, I think, be safely asserted that although the impact of English culture has made it richer and more elastic than before, it has hardly added anything to its beauty and grace. It has imparted to it a number of fresh ideas; but has not enabled it to deal with them gracefully and artistically. Urdu prose has beyond doubt gained much from the new influence; but Urdu poetry is on the decline. The poetry of Mir and Atush who flourished in the first half of the present century is not of a high order, judged by a European standard; but in its best moods it approaches the poetical heights attained by good European poets. There are flashes of genius in it, which will keep it alive so long

as the style which they used does not become obsolete. Since the death of these two poets, Urdu language has not produced any inspired singer. When *Hali*, who possesses neither the inspiration of a born artist, nor the critical taste of a man of letters, becomes, as even so sagacious a writer as Mr. Syed Mahmud calls him, "the celebrated living Mohamedan poet," we may safely assume that the day of Urdu poetry is over. Pandit Ratan Nath Dar is one of the most celebrated names in Urdu prose, but his best works can not be said to contain anything of abiding value. He is the founder of Urdu Romance after the fashion of modern Europe; and this will be his chief title to fame with posterity. But in literary finish, in chiselled phrases, in graces snatched beyond the reach of art, he is nowhere beside the great masters of Urdu who have gone before.

Hindi produced Tulsi Dass' Ramayan—probably its greatest work—long long ago; and it has not produced anything since which comes at all near to it. The Ramayan is beyond doubt the national epic of Upper India. There are Hindi songs of modern origin as is evident from their contents, pretty, and fanciful, and touching, natural in conception, and graceful in execution; but on the whole weak and nerveless, lacking the divine fire, the irresistible impulse of the inspired singer. Hindi prose owes its birth to English influences; but it can hardly be said to have yet attained the position of literary prose. Daya Nand's influence has done much to develop it and expand its scope; but his influence was philosophic rather than literary; and his own greatest work—his commentary on the Veda—is interesting not so much because of its literary excellence, which is very great, as because of its keen criticisms of popular Binduism and the revolution it has wrought and is working in the religious convictions of Hindu society.

The one language which may truly be said to possess a literature of no mean order—and a literature which it owes

entirely to the influence of Western learning is the Bengali.\* In prose and poetry, in fiction and in the domain of serious thought, Bengali dialect has produced writers of remarkable literary powers, some of whom may be called even men of genius. The first quality which distinguishes Bengali Literature from Urdu or even Hindi, in its intense national spirit; which is the source of its inspiration and, therefore, the secret of its power. In the opinion of competent authorities, Bankim Chunder's novels are works of a very high order in the domain of imaginative prose, and deserve to stand beside some standard works of European fiction. This is a very high praise indeed, and none but real literary genius could obtain it from sober criticism. In poetry, Bengal has produced one or two poets of very fine cultured taste; but I am not sure if its success has been equally great in this sphere.† Bengali is now the richest of all the spoken dialects of India, in all kinds of literature—prose or poetical, imaginative or serious, literary or scientific. It is a literature that exercises a real influence upon the Bengali race, and is certainly the most effective medium through which European ideas and sentiments are gradually filtering down to the lowest strata of Indian society. It is the one class of literature produced by modern India which shows signs of nascent genius—the one oasis of genuine intellectual fertility in the midst of the burning sands of so many other vernacular languages.

From the survey of the mental heights attained by those Indians who have received English Education or who have in some remote indirect way caught its contagion, let us turn to those generations which did not know it, and were not affected by it directly or indirectly, and ascertain the quantity and the quality of genius which they produced in the domain of Litera-

\* Bengali prose dates from Ram Mohan Roy, and Bengali Journalism is the product of the third quarter of the present century. (Hunter's Indian Empire p. 412.)

† Dr. Tagore's work had not attained in 1906 its international level.  
Editor.

ture. It is necessary to compare past and present in this respect, as it would help to give us a just and accurate idea of our own achievements. Now, there will be little difficulty in showing that with the possible exception of Bengali fiction, there is hardly any department of literature in any of our vernacular languages in which the present has not much to learn from the past. Think of Tulsi Dass and Kabir Dass, their poetry and their wise aphorisms; their keen insight into the most hidden recesses of the human heart, and the remarkable influence they have exercised in shaping the morality of large masses of men; and then consider if India has produced any moralist, within the last 50 or even 100 years who can at all be compared to them either in genius or in influence. They did not shine in any borrowed lustre; they were original men; born poets gifted with a keen ear for "the still, sad music of humanity"—with a poet's keen sensitiveness to our joys and fears; born teachers who know how to subdue the rebellious energies of a barbarous age, and to teach the loftiest lessons of truth and goodness in words that have been ringing through centuries. Faizi, Abul Fazl, Amir Khusro, Todar Mull, and Bir Bull form the galaxy of mental luminaries who shone round the Imperial throne of Akber; and certainly during the last four hundred years India has produced no greater men. They have left a permanent mark in history and the superb literary gifts of Faizi, and the constructive political genius of Todar Mull will long excite the wonder and the admiration of mankind. Those who have devised the elaborate machinery, called in the official language, "the settlement operation," may yet learn some very salutary lessons for the good of all parties concerned, from the *Ain-i-Akbari* which may safely be placed in the ranks of the immortal books of the world. Later on in the time of Aurangzeb we have Naimat-Khan-i-Ali, a brilliant prose-writer, and Sarmad, a gifted poet, both of whom the very last representatives of Literature as it had flourished during the Mogul *regime*. But the symptoms of intellectual decadence were becoming visible; and the anarchical conditions

which followed upon the death of Aurangzeb destroyed all chance for the cultivation of arts and letters, and consequently extinguished the flame of genius in the country. The active genius—the force of great character—did not, as I shall show later on, suffer to the same extent in the general crash; but an era of internecine warfare, of ravage and rapine, of Pindari raids and Maharatta freebooting was hardly favourable to those pacific pursuits which are among the necessary conditions of intellectual productivity.

From the sphere of intellect and imagination let us turn for a while to that of action and character, and see what eminence has been attained here by the Indians of the nineteenth century. Greatness is of various kinds and degrees and has to be judged by different standards. A man may be very great in intellect, but small in character like Bacon, or he may be a man of heroic mould but of ordinary intelligence like Luther. There are geniuses in thought and geniuses in action, those who produce great thoughts and those who do great deeds; “and as there are Pascals and Mozarts Newtons and Raffaelles, in whom the innate faculty for science or art seems to need but a touch to spring into full vigour, and through whom the human race obtains new possibilities of knowledge and new conceptions of beauty; so there are born men of moral genius to whom we owe ideals of duty and vision of moral perfection, which ordinary mankind could never have attained.”\* It is not necessary that the aim of a great character should always be goodness, any more than that the aim of a great intellect should always be truth; and history offers no sadder spectacle to our sight than that of men of mighty genius in thought or action, or in both, acting under the impulse of ambition and interest, and adding by an abuse of their great gifts, to the terrors, the sorrows, and the degradation of mankind. Still greatness, is greatness, and wherever its material exists it depends very

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\* Huxley's Hume. (*Englishmen of Letters*)—*Editor*.

much upon the external circumstances what form it shall assume, whether it shall turn to a curse or a blessing to the particular epoch and society to which it belongs. But it must be assumed that for the progress of mankind great thinkers and poets are as much needed as great spiritual and political leaders, men who by their bold and heroic conduct carry the race forward to new stages of life and practice, when meditation has done its work and the hour for action has struck. Whether such men arise by accident—are heaven-sent as Carlyle would say, like light-sparks falling upon the dead fuel of ordinary humanity—or, they are the natural products of antecedent social forces, in the language of the scientific school ; it is consistent with either of the hypotheses to hold that in the career of every progressive nation character plays as important a part as intellect, that it is the few men of genius in thought and action who guide the commonplace Many, and that, if in a nation we find even these few great men growing fewer and smaller day by day, we may be sure that that nation is not in a sound state. I am afraid that India is in this condition, it is as destitute of great characters as it is of great intellects.

The century opened with a bright promise of great things which subsequent years have failed to realise. Ram Mohan Roy stands first both in order of time and of merit in the list of great men that modern India has produced. At a time when even the first faint streaks of the new civilisation were hardly visible on the horizon ; when confusion and anarchy reigned all over the country, when the baser elements of our national life seemed to be carrying everything before them, when the phantoms of the past hovered over the soul and men dreamt all sorts of impossible dreams, Ram Mohan Roy not only had the keenness of sight to dip into the future and see the vision of the wonderful things that were to be ; but he also had the heroism of spirit to follow the light of his intelligence, and to impress upon the minds of his contempora-

ries, by sheer force of his audacious courage and reckless sympathy, the possibility of preserving the pristine purity of Hindu life and religion amid the wreck of beliefs and the crash of institutions. For us, living 60 or 70 years after him, it is very easy to be quite sure of the goodness of English Education and civilization, to talk so glibly of social and political reforms, to be so indignant at the abuses of custom and usage ; but there was a time when the most clear-headed men were not so sure about them, when the stoutest hearts could not deal with social and religious abuses with the same freedom and impunity as we do ; and yet it was at a such a time that he raised his voice against *Sutteeism* and other fearful aberrations of popular Hinduism, advocated the cause of English Education with remarkable earnestness and fervour, and laid the foundations of a Theistic Church. Those of us who have witnessed in the latter days of the nineteenth century the mad agitation over the Age of Consent Bill in which so many clever men forgot to profit even by that wisdom which is supposed to come after the event, can form some idea of the storm of opposition which Ram Mohan Roy must have faced when he told his countrymen that Sutteeism was a brutal and cruel practice, that Hinduism with its 33 crore gods and goddesses was a sham and an imposture, that the future progress of India lay through the portals of Western learning. Many wise heads must have shaken at these revolutionary ideas, and the spiritual sires of the Theosophists and Dharm Mandalists of our own day must have called him by all those ugly names which ecclesiastical charity has invented for the fearless seekers of light. But the storm blew over, ignorance and bigotry sank down to their proper level ; the light was kindled, the beginnings of modern civilisation were laid. The practical genius of Ram Mohan Roy had accomplished its mission.



Bengal has not produced another man of his commanding genius; although later on we have Keshub Chander Sen, who if not of the same heroic mould and audacious originality, was yet gifted with the Divine afflatus—the sacred fire which burnt up all spiritual dross and ignited all the noble qualities of the souls of thousands who happened to come under his influence. But in upper India a great man was born whose career cut short in its prime, was destined to give a new lease of life to Hinduism which seemed to be dying everywhere, by placing it upon the rationalism of the Vedas. Competant authorities differ as regards the real philosophic value of his work in the domain of Hindu Theology; but there can hardly be two opinions with respect to the practical effect of his example and teachings upon the Hindu mind. To him more than to any other Indian of this century belongs the credit of having breathed a new life into the inert mass of Hindu society, by inspiring it with the sentiment of nationality. The Arya Samaj is in one sense a greater achievement than the Brahmo Samaj; because it is more national, and because it has communicated the impetus of reform and progress to those classes of Indians who have not yet been sufficiently influenced by English Education and English modes of thought. Swami Daya Nund is, therefore, the most original Hindu of this age—the one great Indian reformer who owes practically nothing to Western culture. If in upper India, the Punjab, and the Rajpootana, Hindus, even such Hindus as do not know a word of English—openly repudiate caste and idol-worship, are able to take pride in the purity of their ancient faith without accepting the morbid overgrowths of later ages, if they are zealous advocates of widow-remarriage and female education and sea voyage, if they have a better organisation than before both for offensive and defensive purposes, and are imbued with a strong national sentiment which is at the bottom of their present polit-

ical revival, it is due to the mighty genius of Daya Nund. Like Ram Mohan Roy, like most of the great ones of the earth, he too was persecuted for his opinions; the fanaticism of his countrymen haunted him everywhere; and he heeded it not; in the doing of his great work he faltered not; but in season and out of season, through good report and through evil report, he went on with his teachings and preachings, sure in the faith that his cause was true and bound to prevail. And it has prevailed.

The Mohamedans who have for the last hundred years been the victims of so many misfortunes political and other, have naturally fallen behind the Hindus in the race of progress, and have produced fewer men of mark in the sphere of thought or action. But in point of political importance and influence in the councils of the Government as well as over a considerable section of the Indian people, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan is an honored name in the annals of modern India. Opinion will remain divided as regards his politics which are beyond doubt narrow and sectarian; but as a reformer and regenerator of the Indian Mussulman community, as the one man who has not only checked its slow decay, but has induced it to adopt the road to improvement by adopting the mental discipline of modern civilization, he will hold a prominent place in the history of his country. He owes much to good luck; and his influence with the Government which is due in a large measure to his being a Mohamedan leader has helped him much in the accomplishment of the great Educational reform of the Mohamedan community. His political narrowness has even now impaired the value of his political sagacity and will in course of time tell upon his great reputation. But making every allowance for chance and circumstances, it must, I think, be admitted that in Syed Ahmad Khan we possess a man of rare genius and mighty purpose.

Ram Mohan Roy, Daya Nund, Syed Ahmed belong to those generations who did not owe much to English Education, and represent a type of character that is becoming rarer day by day. Ram Mohan Roy and Daya Nund are gone ; and Syed Ahmed according to the ordinary calculations of human life belongs to the past rather than the present; but when we look to their successors in various departments of our national activity the decay of character becomes apparent. With the stream of progress we seem to have glided into an age of peace and comfort—of loud disputations and weak convictions—an age in which everybody seems to be prepared to play the *role* of reformer with a light heart, in which the fair promises of materialistic advancement have thrown the ascetic elements of life into the background, and a race of reformers has sprung up, of weak resolve and weaker initiative—fighting shy of the difficulties of the situation, shrinking from self-sacrifice and pain;

“Waiting to strive a happy strife,  
To war with falsehood to the knife,  
And not to lose the good of life.”

The glorious vision of modern culture which has suddenly gleamed upon our sight and the general mental ferment to which it has given rise do not for the present enable us to realise fully and properly the deterioration of character which has overtaken us, but to those who can look beneath the surface, its symptoms are perfectly legible.

Now that the conflict of Eastern and Western civilisations has utterly wrecked the old order, and our oldest beliefs and institutions have been cast into the melting pot to come out in some fresh mould, the reconstruction of our political, social and religious life upon a new basis is the grand duty of the hour. But who are the men who have undertaken it and what are their qualifications for the task?

The religious sentiment has been most deeply affected by the change, and there are loud complaints from all sides that religion is in danger. My belief is that Hinduism is in a critical condition. I do not believe in the immortality of anything under the sun except the Spencerian Unknowable; and whatever may be the hold of Hinduism upon the masses, if it is permissible to dream of a day when these masses will have been raised to the mental level of the educated classes, and if English Education will have the same effect upon the former as it has had upon the latter, then it is perfectly legitimate to hold that when that day comes the knell of Hinduism, as we know it, and as it has existed through centuries, will have sounded. Be the result of this speculation what it may, true it is that while a profound religious change is taking place in India, we look in vain for any master spirit among ourselves to guide the master currents of this change. The hour is said to bring the man, but of modern India we may say, inverting the words of Carlyle, that while the hammer in the horologue of time has been pealing through the universe that there is a change from era to era, the man who would incarnate in himself the tendencies of transition and lead his people safely through the changes is not forthcoming. We have able and earnest workers in the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and in several other religious organisations; but is there any one now living upon whom may be said to have fallen the mantle of Daya Nund or Ram Mohan Roy, or Chaitannya? Among an extremely religious people, and in an age when Belief is engaged in a life-and-death struggle with unbelief, we have no religious teachers and reformers of commanding genius, who may be said to have any strong and durable hold upon the national mind. There can hardly be any greater proof of the decay of Indian genius in the field of action.

We turn to social and political reform, and we find the spectacle discouraging. The new conditions of life have made the reform of certain social abuses not only an indispensable

step to further progress, but an important element of personal happiness. Female education, the abolition of early marriage and forced widowhood, the training of children, the organisation of public charity on some rational basis, the restrictions of caste, specially in relation to sea-voyage—these are some of the important questions pressing for a wise and speedy solution. The nation will not improve so long as these questions are not solved, and they will not be solved so long as some of us do not fight the forces of opposition with all our might and main. Keshub Chunder Sen, Vidya Sagar, Dr Bhandarkar, Mr. Justice Ranade, Dewan Rughu Nath Rao, Mr Malabari are among the most prominent names in the rank of our social reformers and the country owes them a large debt of gratitude. But I am not sure if with the exception of Keshub any one of these has any large following in the country; and even Keshub's influence is religious rather than social. Indeed Keshub lies under the serious charge of having been found wanting when weighed in the balance in the case of his own daughter's marriage. Of the rest it may be said that while they are everything that men of culture and strong national sympathies should be, they hardly come up to the level of those fanatics of Reform whose whole life is a protest against the established order—who have a mania for change—those leaders of forlorn hopes, whose voice is half-battle and who strike the blow while the wise and the prudent remain calculating in their armchairs the final chances of the war. Men like Clarkson and Granville Sharp, Diderot and Condorcet, Shankaracharij and Nanak have by sheer force of their character, by their dauntless courage and inflexible will by an utter disregard of social expediencies and a complete sacrifice of the most coveted prizes of life—reformed and renovated human society in other countries and other times; and in our country at the present time the saviours of society will be those who will be born revolutionists, burning with an enthusiasm for progress—prepared to follow without faint-

ing or faltering, their ideals, like the vision of immortality, through death and the grave. Such characters do not exist in India, but in their place we find Social Conferences and Associations—very good things in their way—meeting periodically—more zealous in settling the question where they should meet than what they should do when they meet—passing resolutions which nobody heeds—and thus going on from year's end to year's end with an amount of patience which is truly admirable. These modern representatives of Sysiphus are really a sight for gods and men. And even this game of Social Reform with its picnics and tea-parties<sup>\*</sup> some times becomes too serious for most of us when any question like that of the Age of consent crops up, and then we have anti-reform demonstrations threatening to smother all reforming spirits under the files of the *Patrika* and the *Patriot* while that brilliant swordsman of Indian radicalism—Surender\* Nath Banerji—may be seen huzzaing the mob from his Editorial chair. What wonder if the hostile critic talks of the superficial vineer of our modern enlightenment?

The greatest achievement of modern Indians lie in the field of politics. Here they have acted quite independently of their past, and the result of their labours represents a decided improvement upon the state of things which had satisfied the Indians of the pre-British era. But while a great work has been done, the men who have done it are not so great. Kristo Dass Pal, Surender Nath Bannerji, Dadabhai Nauroji, K. T. Telang, Pandit Ajoodhia Nath, are among the men of the highest talents that modern India has produced. They have been instrumental in bringing about substantial reforms in the constitution of the Government; they have accomplished what is even better than all reform—they have created a political spirit in the country which is not likely to be extinguished. Still it may, I think, be observed that while they are very superior men—the pride and glory of our country—they just

<sup>\*</sup> This is how it is spelt in the original. *Editor.*

fall short of being great. There is not that magnetism about any one of them which men of action have exercised over large masses of men in other days; they do not compel obedience, they do not command their followers with the voice of authority. Their words are not winged with fire; their deeds do not nerve us to front, without flinching, the storms of fate. All great men of action have been inspired either with the love of authority or with the feeling of sympathy. They acted either because they felt that they were born to rule mankind and to set it right by sheer force; or, because the sorrows of their brother-men were felt by them with the keenness and reality of personal anguish, and they could not rest without doing something to lighten the burden of human ills. In both these motive powers of great deeds, it seems to me, our leading men are wanting. Their heroism does not fire our imaginations; their philanthropy does not touch our hearts. Judge them by their best acts, and you will find that they have done all that men of great talents, considerable public spirit, very creditable aims should have done; they have only failed in that part of the work which required something more than these qualities—which required complete self-abnegation, reckless courage, uncalculating sympathy, an inflexible faith in their cause, and a boundless confidence in their own powers to win it

Take for instance the general uprising of the political spirit in the country, and the National Congress in which it is for the present focussed. Now as regards the merits of this movemet I can say nothing in this place; but a calm dispassionate view of the political ferment going on in India suggests certain inferences which are very significant. The burden of political evils is generally felt. It is said that there are grave flaws in the administration which must be removed. It is urged with great force that there are certain privileges to which we are entitled, but which are denied to us by the Government, that the poverty of India is increasing day by day, that our money instead of feeding our starving millions is ta-

ken away from us to defray the costs of the Chitral expedition, that the military career has been practically closed to Indians, that taxation, which without representation is tyranny in other countries, is the normal policy of the Government in this. It is also stated that the reform of these abuses is a Herculean task; that while in opposition we have a highly civilized race—united by all the ties of public and personal interests—unrivalled in the art of political warfare—on our side we have a people split up into sects and classes, torn by social and religious antipathies, destitute of political spirit, and backward in general culture; that under the circumstances the highest mental and moral efforts of the very best men of the country are needed to prepare their countrymen to face the present political crisis with any hope of success. The best efforts which our political force and fervour has been able to put forth in this direction are embodied in the National Congress movement which thus acquires a very peculiar significance in the history of our political progress. But beyond this, it seems in some very important respects to present a very disappointing spectacle. It is engaged in a serious warfare, and yet it lacks the sinews of war. Its finances are always verging on bankruptcy. Babu Surender Nath Bannerji is required every year to make a thundering speech to raise funds for the expense of its English Agency.\* Mr. Hume several times threatened to resign his office in consequence of the close-fistedness of his adherents. A national movement without funds; a political agitation without fearless agitators, a crusade against national abuses without a host of brilliant swordsmen and warriors! This is the most striking feature of our present political crisis. Consider the history of other movements which have agitated humanity, and the contrast becomes at once apparent. Think of the struggles which the Italians made for their freedom—think of the heroic lives of Cavour, Mazzini, and Garibaldi; think of the martyrdom which thousands suffered with them for the sake of their country's cause. Think

\* It has recently been abolished and its organ India discontinued. *Editor.*



of the struggles of Greece with Turkey;\* think of the unexpected display of unflinching patriotism by the Japanese in their recent war with China; and then think of your own political agitation. It is true that we are differently situated, that ours is a peaceful constitutional agitation; but no agitation can afford to dispense with patriotism, zeal, and courage, nor has the path of any reform been a bed of roses. A good dose of fanaticism is essential to a reformer, and an agitation without a host of fanatics inspired with the courage of despair, can scarcely ever hope to be successful. Our political leaders are anything but fanatics†—which would be a merit if they were not living in a stormy epoch—they have no love for martyrdom, and are very patriotic so long as their patriotism is consistent with the safety of their person and property. But calculating patriotism is hardly suited to revolutionary times, and those of us who have undertaken to build up the national fabric upon a new political basis must be prepared to follow, soon or late, in the footsteps of the builders of the Temple of Jerusalem who worked with trowel in one hand and sword in the other. If we are not prepared to work in this fashion, we are not the men to whom the nation should look up for safe guidance through the present crisis.

Thus far, I have tried in a cursory review of some of the important facts in the history of modern India, to show that both in the sphere of speculation and in the sphere of action—Indian genius has declined rather than progressed; that in spite of the Educational and other advantages which modern Indians have over the preceding generations, they are smaller both in intellect and in character than the Indians of a hundred or two hundred years ago. It remains for me now to describe in the concluding part of this article, some of the principal causes to which, in my opinion, the decay of Indian genius may be attributed.

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\* They are still going on. *Editor.*

† Unrestrained Fanaticism has also its unsavoury aspects as we all know. *Editor.*

## III.

If it is true, as I have tried to establish in the preceding parts of this essay, that the India of to-day is deficient both in speculative and in active genius, as compared with the India of a hundred or two hundred years ago, and that in intellect and in character we fall short of the heights attained by our ancestors, an inquiry into the causes which have brought about this decadence assumes at once not only a merely theoretical interest, but a real and vital importance from the standpoint of practical reformers and statesmen. National greatness is a matter of supreme concern from every point of view, and it can only be judged by taking a measure of our great men. Great men, or, men of genius interest us in so far as they influence for good or ill, the fortunes of mankind, and reflect in their lives its highest mental and moral achievement; and in attempting, therefore, to form an estimate of our great men, my aim has been to arrive at some clear idea for my own benefit regarding the position and prospects of the Indian peoples in the race of progress. Have we made any real progress during the last hundred years? Are we more intellectual, more original, more moral—better men and better citizens than the generations that have gone before? In order to arrive at a correct answer to this question, I have put myself the question: are our great men of the present day greater than, or, even equal to the great men of the past? The answer to this question involves, in my opinion, the answer to the other. "What is important" says John Morley\* "is the mind and attitude, not of the ordinary man, but of those who should be extraordinary. The decisive sign of the elevation of a nation's life is to be sought among those who lead or ought to lead. The test of the health of a people is to be found in the utterances of those who are its spokesmen, and in the action of those whom it accepts or chooses to be its chiefs. We have to look to the magnitude of the issues and the height of the interests which engage its foremost spirits." If, therefore,

we find, as I am afraid we shall that those who form the vanguard of progress in our generation are yet from a mental and moral point of view in the rear of those who have preceded them, the inference irresistibly forces itself upon the mind that as a people we must have deteriorated from our former state. In support of this view I have said enough in the earlier parts of this essay and need say no more now; but the present is a fitting occasion to suggest—for I can do no more than suggest—a few of the principal causes, a careful examination of which promises to yield an adequate explanation of the particular phenomenon of our national life with which I am for the present concerned.

The question is extremely intricate and puzzling, and some answers—good or bad—have been furnished to it. With those who accept the Carlylean theory of great men I cannot stop to argue. Sociology is now an accepted science; and the writings of DeTocqueville, Comte, and Taine in France and of Mill, Spencer, Morley, Maine and Lecky in England have furnished us with a body of generalised social and political truths as exact and verifiable as those of Biology and Geology. While agreeing with Carlyle that the great man is a light-spark from heaven who cannot always be accounted for by referring to his racial surroundings, or, to use the language of a scientific expert “the man of genius is distinct in kind from the man of cleverness, by reason of the working within him of strong innate tendencies—which cultivation may improve, but which it can no more create, than horticulture can make thistles bear figs,”\* still the theory of heredity has indicated with sufficient clearness the limits within which the modifications of human nature both on its moral and on its mental side are possible; and thus, although it may be difficult to say why Shakespeare and Newton were born, when and where they were born, yet no sane man doubts that they could never have been born in the Andaman Islands or

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\* Huxley.

Zululand. Not only that a savage race could not have produced them; but if some accident had placed them in its midst they would in the absence of the experiences of civilized life, its means and appliances, its motives and ambitions, have hardly been able to make any use of their great powers, and would have wasted their sweetness on the desert air. For the purposes of my argument I assume that great men are not inexplicable accidents, but natural products of social circumstances—the resultants of forces that have been working for ages. I, therefore, dismiss from further consideration the hypothesis that some happy accident gave us great men even in the midst of very anarchical circumstances which have since passed away, and that we must wait for another turn in the wheel of fortune to look upon their like again.

In direct contrast to those who believe in the supernatural origin of great men, stand those who believe in their natural origin; and these too have attempted to solve the problem upon which I am desirous of inviting discussion. Sir Henry Maine, Sir Alfred Lyall, Sir John Strachey and others have offered certain solutions the substance of which is so well summed up by Walter Bagehot, himself an acute student of social science that I must give it in his own words. “The experience of the English in India shows—if it shows anything—that a highly civilized race may fail in producing a rapidly excellent effect on a less civilized race, because it is too good and too different. The two are not *en rapport* together; the merits of the one are not the merits prized by the other; the manner-language of the one is not the manner-language of the other. The higher being is not and cannot be a model for the lower; he could not mould himself on it if he would, and would not if he could. Consequently, the two races have long lived together, ‘near and yet far-off,’ daily seeing one another and daily interchanging superficial thoughts, but in the depths of their mind, separated by a

whole era of civilization, and so affecting one another only a little in comparison with what might have been expected ”\*

It is not without great diffidence that I venture to differ from a thinker of Bagehot's eminence, still it is I think possible to show that his opinion while very useful in as much as it suggests a modifying circumstance, which has to be taken into account, is yet far from being a correct solution of the problem. It is not enough to say that English civilization has not been very successful in India because the people are so different and so low down in the scale of civilization as compared with Europeans. As a matter of fact, they are neither so low nor so different as they are supposed to be. But certain definite and ascertainable causes have been at work which are responsible for the comparative failure of Western culture in India—causes which have produced similar results in Europe, and which will have to be combated with weapons very similar to those which have helped the advance of European nations. Indeed, without raising the vexed question as to the respective positions supposed to be occupied by India and Europe in the order of social evolution, we may profitably ask the question as to why Western Culture, if it could not produce any ‘rapidly excellent effects,’ should have failed to evolve even so much genius in this country as did our “primitive” culture only a few centuries ago. The question, as I have put it, has not to my best knowledge and belief, been yet subjected to any serious discussion; perhaps, some do not think it a pertinent question at all, as they do not believe in the decay of genius in modern India. I, however, raise it here, for reasons already given, not because I presume to answer it, but because I think I may indicate some of the salient points without which no answer can be complete.

I start with the hypothesis that mental and moral greatness—or, genius as I call it—is always, like all other social

phenomena the result of certain definite causes. It is the product of social, political, and religious institutions. Anything which affects these will affect it, too, both in quantity and quality. If in India religion, government, and social customs and usages have passed through certain changes, a study of the nature of these changes will furnish us the key to a proper comprehension of the problem which we have set before ourselves.

The advent of the English in India is a great factor in the problem, because they have brought us face-to-face with an order of new facts which have unsettled the whole course of our national life. They have given us not only a foreign Government of which we have had plenty of experience but a novel Government of which we have had no experience. It is the Government of an alien race which is determined to maintain its alien character. It is the Government of those who do not mix with us, who have chosen to remain a privileged class and isolated from us, in direct contrast to the Mehomedans who mixed with us and made India their home. It is one of the chief points of distinction between the two alien rules, and has exercised a remarkable influence upon some of those sentiments, a certain elevation of which is necessary for the growth and development of genius.

It is one of the common places of political science that foreign domination is degrading to human nature. And why? Because the conqueror is seldom considerate to the feelings and interests of the conquered. Those who are strong think they have a right to use for their purpose those who are weak. Those who govern naturally come to think that they are superior to those whom they govern, and they are never slow to impress this sense upon them in season and out of season. If the rulers belong to an alien race, they naturally feel little sympathy for their subject people; if, besides, being alien they are also more civilized than their subjects, their pride is apt to degenerate

into arrogance. But the pride of the conqueror is incompatible with the patriotism of the conquered. If people become patriotic, the foreign domination must come to an end. But if they become reconciled to it, the sentiment of patriotism must wither. There are, I admit, many circumstances which correct the evils of foreign rule. The ruling class may be highly civilized like the English, in which case its rule will fit the subject people for a better form of Government; or on account of many points of mental and moral affinity and under the pressure of certain political necessities, it may identify itself with its subjects, become absorbed among them, like the Mehomedans, in which case foreign domination will lose its chief sting, by effacing from the public mind the humiliating sense of conquest. Rome owed its greatness to foreign conquests, but it civilized those whom it brought under its sway. A Norman conqueror was the founder of English Monarchy; but the distinction of Norman and Saxon is lost in the English nation as we now see it. A foreign Government in order to be a provisionally good Government must be either a civilizing agency, or one in which the distinctions of conquest are lost. The English rule is undoubtedly a civilizing agency and, therefore, a good Government; but it lacks an important element of goodness which the Mehomedan rule possessed, and to that extent its work has been defective and incomplete. The Mehomedan ruler was unapproachable, placed beyond the reach of mortal man, hedged round with a Divinity to which no European ruler can aspire. But in this respect he was as much above his Mehomedan subjects, as he was above his Hindu subjects. Both belonged to a lower order of creation. But between Hindu and Mehomedan subjects there were few points of class-distinction. When all were equally inferior to the ruler, nobody felt humiliated. The thing was accepted as an ordinance of nature; no body doubted it, or, questioned it. The feeling of self-respect did not suffer, because men in surrendering

themselves to the King believed—and it is impossible to realise the intensity of the belief in these days of democratic levelling—that they were paying homage not to an ordinary man but to one who ruled by right divine. The English Government is obeyed with a different feeling. The masses respect Englishmen not because they are believed to have any divinity in them, but because they are more powerful. The chief element which chastened the feeling of loyalty in former times is gone. We feel that the English are no more than men, but still they treat us as their inferiors; indeed, they have defined and emphasised our inferiority by the statutes under which we are governed, and this keeps alive in us the sense of humiliation which is one of the chief evils of foreign rule. This has told fearfully upon the feelings of self-respect and manhood which are among the necessary ingredients of national greatness.

Besides, while there was no patriotic sentiment in pre-English India, in the modern sense of the phrase, there were the tribal sentiment and the pride of caste. The Mehomedan rule did not touch them because they were not foreign to its own nature. Now the pride of birth has played a great part in the progress of mankind, and the sentiment of tribe and caste is only a development of it. Men felt raised and elevated by the consciousness of being associated with the traditions and achievements of their tribe or caste, and acted on great occasions as a modern European would under the impulse of national sentiment. A certain degree of temperature is necessary for the production of great deeds and great thoughts; and this temperature was supplied to the Indians of the past by the sentiment of caste and tribe. Under the present *regime*, the sentiment of caste and tribe is fast dying away, if it is not already dead; while in the face of the invidious distinctions of conquest maintained by the English, no pride of political elevation seems to have taken its place to supply



any adequate motive for great thoughts or heroic actions. One of the chief recommendations of representative Government is that it is a most effective instrument of national education. On the other hand, the very unsettledness of the older Government, and the chances which it left open for the success of adventurous spirits, while it made no distinction between the ruling class and the ruled, was a great incentive to men to make the best use of their powers, "and kept alive even in servitude itself the spirit of an exalted freedom."\* We have hardly got as yet any genuine representative Government, while we have lost the inspiring and exalting influences of Mehomedan despotism.†

Now, it is a psychological truth that strong passions are the parents of great thoughts and actions. In the paroxysms of love and hate, anger and pity, the meanest day-drudge acts like a hero. But among the sentiments which have governed and guided the life of man, the most powerful are those of Patriotism, Religion, and Honor or Fame. We shall not find these sentiments in their modern sense in primitive or less advanced societies; but in some rudimentary form they are present everywhere, as the most powerful springs of individual and social conduct. Men have always fought for their country, tribe, religion, or glory. These sentiments are none the less active in the breast of the modern man; only, their form is changed, and the tactics of warfare have changed. History gives numerous instances of nations who did great deeds and rose under the inspiration of patriotism, as well as of those who lost all capacity for great deeds and fell, because they had lost patriotism. In ancient Greece there existed many political institutions which were not very favourable to genius. There existed serious limitations on the liberty of thought and speech. Statesmen like Pericles and Alcibiades, and philosophers like Anaxagoras and Socrates did not escape social odium for their views. But a certain

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\* Burke's French Revolution — *Editor*.

† Temple's India.

amount of national enthusiasm may be discerned in the Athenians of that day, who showed themselves men of reckless political and moral courage whenever their country's interests were at stake. They were proud of their country and saw splendid possibilities for it in the future. They felt raised by the dream of an Athens that was to be the queen of the then civilized world, and under the impulse of this patriotic fervour and pride, performed those mighty deeds which made Greece a country of which the poet truly said that:—

“ One half her soil has walked all the rest,  
In poets, heroes, martyrs, sages.”

What is true of ancient Greece, is true of England in the 16th century. There was hardly any popular education, comparatively little civil and religious liberty; but in spite of all this the mere fact that to be an Englishman meant to be safe from Spain and the Inquisition, and to enjoy a certain degree of political freedom which was not then possible to France inspired the Englishmen of those days with an intense patriotic pride which kindled them into heroes. England produced sailors, explorers, poets, thinkers, statesmen whose names can perish only with the human race.\*

On the other hand, the best instance of political consequences arising from want of patriotic feelings is furnished by our own country. Professor Seely has written a famous book to prove that the English did not conquer India, as Alexander conquered Persia, but got it by getting native chiefs to fight with one another; in other words, we lost India because we were unpatriotic.

But although lacking patriotism, Indians were bound to be defeated by those who were patriotic, they yet possessed strong caste and tribal sentiments which are the germs of patriotism; and these sentiments whenever they were inflamed by any social or political circumstance evolved a wonderful amount of heroism and moral fervour in the country. The

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\* Pearson's National Life and Character.

rise of the Maharattas in the Deccan and of the Sikhs in the Punjab show—if it shows anything—that even such classes of men as do not possess any culture nor have ever known national organisation, may, when their minds are once inspired with feelings which lift them above purely selfish concerns, and when their hearts are once ignited with the larger hope of raising their political status and winning for themselves a share in the Government of the country, be incited to do deeds, which can hardly be explained by their historic antecedents. The object of the Maharattas was not to save India from the oppressions and corruptions of the Mehomedan power in the days of its decline; but to clear the way for their own free-booting pursuits; mixed up no doubt with the desire to assert Hinduism against the intolerance of Aurangzeb. In the same way, the Sikhs did not mean to turn the Mehomedans out of India; but represented, perhaps better than the Maharattas, a powerful protest on behalf of the persecuted Hindus against Mehomedan fanaticism. But although these two movements were patriotic in a narrow sense of the term, yet, even as such—being no more than explosions of tribal feelings—they served to quicken men to heroic action by making them conscious of self-respect, and by enlisting their sympathies in causes which widened the sphere of their activity and expanded the scope of their vision. Sivaji and Madho Rao, Guru Govind and Ranjit Singh, deserve to be placed among the greatest leaders of men; yet they are the sons of the revolution which was excited by the latter-day evils of the Mogul Empire, and which eventually destroyed it. Their age needed—as every revolutionary age generally does—brave and reckless soldiers, and they supplied this need, and stamped their character upon their communities. The Mahratta and the Sikh powers are gone; but the Mahratta and the Sikh people remain—fallen and disorganised but still retaining even in the day of their decline, the spirit of nationality and the pride of rule.

Under the settled and constitutional form of Government now existing in India the rise of adventurous spirits like Sivaji and Ranjit Singh has become very difficult, if not impossible. A new type of character is now in making under new influences which are dissolving the old type, and I doubt not that the former will in due course of time be an improvement upon the latter, if proper corrections are applied. But for the present we are passing through a transitional epoch in which the energy of intellect and character has fallen below the level it had attained in the past. In place of the spirit of daring and enterprise which marked less pacific times, although it was confined to a limited class, and the dignity of caste and tribe which was then an unbought of grace of life, we have a certain measure of political spirit now widely spread among the people than before as one of the happiest fruits of those popular principles of Government which animate the British policy in this country, and this political spirit is the parent of that mental stir and activity which is a novel feature in the life of modern Indians. The nationalising influence of this spirit is obvious as well as its efficacy, as an instrument of popular culture. Our politicians are fully alive to this side of the new spirit, and are constantly impressing it upon the minds of the people. I am concerned here with the other side—that side which is germane to my subject, the influence, that is which it exercises upon the production of great intellects and great characters.

Intense political spirit is not favourable to intellectual pursuits. This may sound like a paradox, but it is true nevertheless. Political matters generally require prompt decisions and prompt actions. They are generally an affair of compromise in which no opinion can be allowed to be followed consistently to its logical consequences. Those

who deal with politics have to content themselves as a rule with half-measures which are based upon half-truths. Since under a popular constitution, it is the Majority that rules, the aim of politicians is to win popular opinion upon their side. But popular opinion is the opinion of the populace and the populace consists mostly of fools. The best statesman is one who follows while he seems to lead public opinion. But the greatest truths of science and philosophy are in their very nature most abstract, and it is only very trained intellects that can properly grasp them. The masses are not only incapable of grasping them, but hardly possess the patience and the lowliness of spirit to bear being reminded of their ignorance by those who are. The consequence is that if the people do not show any readiness to rise to the level of their leaders, the leaders are never slow to come down to their level. The standard of intellectual eminence is lowered, because truth is placed in the second place and political expediency in the first place. And newspaper press comes to the aid of this debasement of the intellectual currency. It flatters popular prejudices and whims because it can live only by pleasing the public. It diffuses popular intelligence but only by lowering its standard. It intensifies party spirit which is for the present a necessary evil of popular Government all over the world. But when once it becomes necessary to mould one's thoughts upon party lines, the love of abstract truth which knows no party is at an end. The evil is rampant in England, it is beginning to raise its head in this country too. It is an evil necessity which has ranged the native press against the Government; and for this the Government is responsible in a large measure. But at the same time it is impossible to deny that upon many questions, the native press takes up positions which but for party-considerations would be inexplicable. Indian politicians have to preach sophisms which have no other justification than that they tickle popular

fancies. Even when our politicians are right they put forward their opinion not as resting upon some sound philosophic principle or on some truth of universal application, but as some device suggested by some passing phase of current politics; and as such even the educative influence of their opinions is lost upon the people. But it is one of the necessary conditions of intellectual progress that there should be a single-minded devotion to truth—that the thinker should follow the chain of his reasoning without any regard for its practical consequence—that he should look upon his intellect as his own property which he is perfectly free to use as he likes, and not as the majority may choose to decide. It may be true that Saul while seeking his father's asses found a kingdom; but in the intellectual sphere nobody can hope to achieve much who occupies himself with gathering safe and practical opinions so congenial to the nature of commonplace humanity, and allows his intelligence in the pursuit of political fame and name to rush down the precipice with the herd of swine. The dignity of disinterested intellectual effort is for the present at a discount in India, and the consequence is, that while our political leaders have their full reward in the honor and fame they enjoy for rising as little as they can above the mental level of their followers; they seem to be somewhat forgetful of the heavy price they are paying for the same, in the loss of originality and profundity of thought.

Government by discussion, such as every popular Government must be, is, I am fully aware, favourable to that general diffusion of intelligence which is at the bottom of all true intellectual progress. A great writer has even gone to the length of explaining the progressive character of modern civilization as compared with the fixed character of ancient civilization by starting the interesting speculation that progress commenced first in those countries where

thought was least hampered, and where the political institutions allowed a certain measure of free discussion. It cannot, however, be doubted that sometimes discussion may be carried too far, and the heat and haste of political life may divert the best part of the mental energies of a nation from those pure intellectual efforts which require calm and meditation. But political struggles and too much absorption in the pursuit of material interests, a necessary consequence of these struggles, are unfavourable to them. With Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau closed the golden age of French literature in the 18th century. In England for forty years after the death of Goldsmith, there was a halt in literary activity, until Scott, Byron and Wordsworth appeared on the scene. Shakespeare's dramas were produced after the religious struggles of the 16th century were over. The civil wars of the Puritans had the same blighting effect upon literature, and for thirty years even Milton did not produce any considerable thing in poetry. Although Dryden did something to keep up the reputation of English poetry, yet prose literature did not revive until the Hanoverian Settlement.\* In modern England a similar change is visible. There is a decided decline in her literary activity as compared with what it was in the early part of the reign of Queen Victoria. Tennyson and Browning among the poets, Carlyle, Macaulay, Thackeray, George Eliot among prose writers and novelists are gone; but they have left no successors. In the higher regions of philosophy and science, Mill, Hamilton, Spencer, Bain, Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall had done their best work by the end of the 'sixties'; and now Herbert Spencer is probably the only living English philosopher who enjoys a world-wide reputation. America has been singularly barren in speculative activity; and the same may be said as regards her literature. She has produced no philosopher of first-rate eminence, and in letters her greatest names are Emerson, Hawthorne, and

\* Frederic Harrison.

Longfellow. The British Colonies are even more conspicuous for their speculative and literary barrenness. Australia and the Canada Dominions have not yet given one great literary man or philosopher or original thinker to the world. The fact is that literature and philosophy require calm and meditation; but stir and unrest is the usual condition of democratic societies. They require prompt action which is the enemy of deep thought; and they further require to justify their actions by basing them upon opinions which appeal to popular biases and sympathies. But there is nothing which the populace dislikes more than originality; and without originality there can be no genius. India has assimilated the intense political spirit of the west without certain other saving conditions which have hitherto prevented the West from landing in complete stagnation. In the first place, while most people in Europe engage in politics, there are some who possess the means and a sufficient incentive to devote themselves if not to letters and philosophy, at least, to science without which no European nation can hope to maintain its position in the competition of trade. In the second place, the modern political situation which is forcing every European State to strengthen its national defence, is favourable to that military discipline which in spite of its many drawbacks, is yet, in the midst of so many softening circumstances of modern civilized life, one of the chief preservatives of the energy of character. Somehow or other, we have not yet taken to trade; while the military career is practically closed to us. The whole educated class has thrown itself headlong into the whirl of politics; those who can write, write in the newspapers, those who can think, think upon the passing measures of the hour. Originality is gone out of fashion, because original thoughts do not tell in practical politics.



Now, as to the moral effects of the political spirit upon our character. Intellect and character act and react upon each other; the pursuit of mean and grovelling ideas—the habit of accepting half-truths or useful fictions create those mental twists which never fail to distort conduct; while “it is a necessary condition to the triumph of the moral bias that it should first pervert the understanding.”\* One of the chief moral biases which the political spirit generates is a love of the expedient—a feverish regard not for what is absolutely true, but for what the people may be persuaded to believe as true. A politician dare not rebuke national vices, nay, sometimes, he is obliged to flatter them. He must be a party-man, or, else, he will have no influence, and the art of party management is an art of compromise. At times he must indulge in equivocations and mental reservations; and it is seldom safe for him to propound principles of policy which would estrange him for his party. In private life he follows his conscience, but in public life he must walk in the light of party conscience. Truth should be pursued by him not as an end in itself, but as a means to some political end. When truth and party interests clash, the former must go to the wall. He must be a Liberal or a Conservative, a Nationalist or an Imperialist, a Congressist or an anti-Congressist; he must not question the articles of his party-creed; he must love what his party loves, hate what his party hates. This public opinion which is always the opinion of the party in power, comes to acquire something like the infallibility of the Catholic Church, and those who dissent from it are treated with the same intolerance as the Catholic Church showed toward the heretics. The moral influence of such discipline upon character is obvious. Men lose self-reliance and the energy of initiative. They lose individuality of character by acting with their party, as they lose originality of intellect by thinking in crowds. The spirit of heroism languishes, and the courage to do and dare in the face of opposition fails.† In

\* Mill.

† Lecky.

India party discipline seems to have gone very far indeed. There are certain political heroes whom every body is bound to praise and follow. There are certain other lines of political conduct which every body is bound to condemn and reject.\* It is a mistake to think that mental and moral biases contracted in the political sphere do not affect other spheres also. Human nature cannot be split up into pieces which are to be distributed according to the different spheres in which man has to work. Those who do not care for truth in politics will not care for it in social matters; those who are afraid of offending public opinion by suggesting or undertaking any political innovation, will be equally afraid of offending it by preaching any social reform. Those who bow down to the majority in material concerns will hardly hesitate to bow down to it in spiritual concerns, if it is as earnest regarding the one as it is regarding the other. This seems to me an explanation of the indifference of our leading men towards questions of social reform. Upon politics it is easy to win the sympathy of the people. The Government is alien and unpopular; those who oppose and attack it, strike a chord of national sympathy. But upon social questions opinion is divided; the masses have strong attachment for customs and traditions; to question the goodness means to raise a host of opposition; but opposition is fatal to party organisation; and therefore those whose aim is political leadership—and in India every school boy cherishes this aim—are very chary of saying anything which may shock the prejudices of their countrymen and carefully keep themselves aloof from the sphere of social reform for which their political training seems to have totally unfitted them. But great character is the product of strong feelings, and the food of feelings is action. Men acquire heroic disposition and individuality of character by living in circumstances in which they have to fight with difficulties and dangers, and to rely upon their conscience and intellect when

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\* How painfully true to-day. *Editor.*

they have parted company with their nearest and dearest friends. Our political life with its manifold advantages in other respects is defective in this discipline; and therefore it has failed to produce great characters.

There is another respect in which the political spirit, aided by the printing press, has affected the standard of literary and speculative genius in this country. To every popular constitution a certain amount of literary activity is necessary. It must carry on its work by debate and discussion; and debate and discussion in order to be effective require oratory and an active press. But oratory needs no deep thinking, and newspapers care more for the quickness with which they give their opinions than for their soundness. The stimulating effects of the periodical literature upon English society have been noticed by some very able writers.\* Those who have no time to write books give their views in short articles. This change in the literary tastes of England, has enabled the lawyer-class to take a leading part in the formation of opinion in England through the medium of periodical literature; and a similar phenomenon is discernible in India. But the ascendancy of periodical literature is apt to create in men's mind a certain amount of impatience for big books requiring thoughtful study. John Stuart Mill has described this phase of modern political life—as he discerned it more than fifty years ago and as it has since become more and more marked—so well that I can do no better than quote his own words:—

“This is a reading age; and precisely because it is so reading an age, any book which is the result of profound meditation, is, perhaps, less likely to be duly and profitably read than at a former period. The world reads too much and too quickly to read well. When books were few, to get through one was a work of time and labour: what was written with thought was read with thought, and with a desire to extract from it as much of the materials of know-

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\* Lecky's *European Morals*,

ledge as possible. But when almost every person who can spell, can and will write, what is to be done? It is difficult to know what to read except by reading everything. The world, in consequence, gorges itself with intellectual food, and in order to swallow the more, *bolts* it. It is for this among other causes, that so few books are produced of any value.”\*

We have not reached this stage in India yet; the reading age—the age in which every Indian would read, even if he reads too quickly to read well—is a dream of the future. The mass of the people are sunk in abject ignorance, and the first great duty which rests upon their leaders and their Government is to teach them the rudiments of knowledge. Before they can read too quickly, they must be taught to read at all. But while the warning given by Mill does not apply to the Indian people as a whole; to our educated classes it does with very great force. In Bengal with profound scholarship there is a considerable amount of superficial reading and thinking, while the case of Bombay and Madras is somewhat better. So long as the literary ambition of young Indians is to write for the newspaper they will never produce anything solid and substantial. The habit of expressing half-formed opinion in a slipshod manner is an evil habit; it perverts the understanding and even distorts the moral sense. The divine spirit brooding over the primeval deep till out of chaos an ordered world arose, is a beautiful scriptural allegory, symbolising the career of all earnest thinkers who detaching themselves from the rush and roar of practical life, attempt to discover by deep and persistent thinking, the reign of law and order amid the chaos and caprice of natural phenomena. There was a time in India when great books were produced although there was no printing press. They were produced under the system of patronage which then prevailed. The

\* Discussions and Dissertations.

aristocratic class patronised literary men, who wrote books which were meant for the select few. But the few read them with thought and care. The patronage system if it was not favourable to the diffusion of knowledge, was eminently favourable to its cultivation by a select class; and this system has prevailed whenever despotic or aristocratic form of Government have prevailed. The Athenian democracy which has left an immortal record of its progress in art, science, philosophy, and poetry, was only an aristocracy tempered by a certain measure of free discussion.\* In India, both under the Hindu and the Mohamedan rulers, poets, artists, philosophers were an appendage of the Court, and wrote for those who had leisure to enjoy their works. Professor MaxMuller has noticed somewhere the fact how the whole of the Veda has been preserved in India without the help of writing, simply by being learnt by heart by the Brahmans from generation to generation. The observation applies equally to other great books of the Sanskrit literature, and indeed to some great books in other languages. Homer's Iliad, like the Veda, belongs to ages before the invention of writing: and for centuries was preserved only in the memories of men. The thing is that when there are a few literary productions, they can be easily committed to memory; and as they are of sterling merit, being written for the select few, every body takes delight in knowing them by heart. Many poems or literary pieces are produced; but only a few are chosen; and the Veda has lived up to our time not only because it belonged to an age when man committed everything to memory, but because of its real intrinsic worth. The patronage system was not an ideal system; it had many defects, it tolerated originality only in certain matters while in certain other matters it discouraged it; it belonged to primitive ages and passed away with those ages; but within its limited sphere it did much

\* Main's Popular Government.

good by aiding and encouraging literary and speculative genius; and now that it is dead and buried beyond hope of resurrection, we have in its place a system of free and open competition, under which the prize of victory belongs not to him who thinks most deeply and writes most slowly, but to him who thinks most superficially and writes most quickly. Such a system has never been favourable to artistic, literary, or speculative genius; and if we have chosen to accept it in its unmitigated form, we must bid adieu to all eminence in art, letters, and philosophy.

There are other circumstances—not political but moral and social—which have contributed to the decay of genius in modern India. One of them is the absence of a leisured literary class. The richer classes, representing the old nobility and aristocracy of India, do not read anything. Having lost their position, both with the Government and the people, under the new democratic influences which are everywhere weakening the principle of inheritance in the government of mankind, they seem to have lost with it their self-respect as well. But an aristocracy which loses its political influence while it retains the pride and pelf of its position, is apt to become demoralised. The main incentive to the acquisition of the accomplishments of the ruling class is taken away, and idleness aided with wealth gives rise to that luxurious and sensual mode of life of which we know so many instances. It is possible that in course of time ‘the upper ten thousand’ of our society, may by-and-by come to relish knowledge like their forefathers, who if they did not themselves cultivate learning, at least patronised those who did; and in one corner of the country—in Bengal for instance—we have the case of the Landed aristocracy which under certain favourable circumstances—the chief among them being the Permanent Settlement—has acquired a certain taste for knowledge and improvement; and has with the help of its leisure and means proved one of the best instruments to which

the literary activity of the Bengali people may be ascribed. The other classes of the Indian people who, in the absence of commercial activity, have to earn their livelihood either by entering the Government service or by following the legal profession, have obviously little leisure for purely intellectual pursuits. They are poor, entangled in the meshes of a family system which puts a heavy strain upon the energies of the bread winner, and used to the custom of early marriage which is apt to increase family-burdens, and their object naturally is to get on in life. From boyhood their gaze is fixed upon the law or the service as the be-all of existence; their social surroundings disable them from cherishing the aim of acquiring knowledge for its own sake; and the grovelling spirit thus generated in early life chills and blights the aspirations of manhood. No doubt, the phenomenon is not new in history. The early students of Oxford and Cambridge Universities were children of the poorer classes. They entered the Universities to get on in life; and in those days 'getting on' meant entering the Church or adopting the clerical profession. \* I have no doubt that the necessity to acquire knowledge for the purpose of getting on in life must have blighted the genius of many a student of those days, and rare must have been the cases in which men rose above their circumstances and wrung knowledge from the hard hands of penury. But even in those backward times, there existed a leisured class who did in a measure patronise knowledge, and there were the Church and the monasteries where classical and theological studies were prosecuted. In India, so far as English education goes, the scholar cultivating knowledge in the retreat of his closet, unmindful of any material gain, has disappeared; and with competitive examination in every walk of life, has grown up a tendency to acquire a superficial knowledge of everything and a sound knowledge of nothing—a tendency which is the bane of real scholarship and has wrecked the

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\* Maine's Village Communities.

literary career of many a man of promise. The theological students, Hindu and Mehomedan, such as many still be seen pursuing their studies with zeal and ardour, without any regard to their practical utility, are the survivals of a system under which thousands cultivated knowledge for its own sake; and although the particular branches of knowledge which these students study may have now lost touch with the modern world, yet the single-minded devotion with which they pursue them is an element in their character, which our University-going young men will be all the better for trying to cultivate in their own lives.

There is an aspect of the competitive system which governs our education and professions, to which sufficient attention does not seem to have yet been paid, and upon which I venture to hazard a speculation of my own. Leisure, always a necessary condition of mental progress, is the great need of early societies. Slavery springs up, because it makes leisure possible. The builders of the Parthenon were slaves; ancient Greece had its Helots and Hellenes; ancient Rome its Patricians and Plebians. What slavery did in other countries, caste did in a milder but more effective manner, in India. The priestly caste cultivated knowledge, the trading caste carried on trade; the servile caste did menial labour; and the military caste defended the body politic from internal and external aggressions. By establishing the principle of the division of labour, it defined the duties of each class and enabled it to perform them more effectively.\* It fitted the Indian society for 'the constant co-operation of contrasted persons' which is one of the greatest triumphs of modern civilization.† The principles of use and disuse and of inheritance acted in the course of centuries. Those who applied themselves to brain-work grew in brain-power; those who led a life of fighting and struggles, grew in courage and muscles; those who were

\* Comte's Positive Philosophy.

† Physics and Politics.



condemned to menial labour, grew stupid and became slavish in their habits and temperaments. They transmitted their mental, moral, and physical traits to their descendants; through centuries these traits became fixed, and gave rise to those distinctions which are not simply social and political but ethnic and physiological in the different castes constituting the Indian community. There is an *innate* difference—mental and moral—between a Brahman and a Chatrya—much more so between him and a Sudra. The one has been trained through long ages to develop his brain the other to develop his muscles; the one has inherited a civilized human nature, the other a savage human nature. What the Brahman can do cannot be done by men of other castes so well; what men of other castes can do, cannot be done by him so well. The efficiency of each caste in its own work and its deficiency in the work of another caste is due to the devotion through centuries of each caste to the performance of its particular function. "It is a law, universally illustrated by organisation of every kind, that in proportion as there is to be efficiency, there must be specialization, both of structure and of function—specialization, which of necessity, implies accompanying limitation."\* The democratic spirit of which the principle of free competition is a necessary accompaniment, is one of the most powerful solvents of caste; and with the dissolution of caste, the specialization of social functions such as time out of mind have been distributed in Indian society, is bound to be seriously disturbed. And this in two ways. The literary classes being free to choose any calling they like, will not stick to one particular calling, but will adopt that which may for the time being seem to serve their particular needs. Again, other classes, who have not been hitherto literary, finding a free field for the application of their powers, and living under a system

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\* Spencer's Essays, Principles of Sociology,

which makes a certain measure of knowledge one of the necessary conditions of success in the present struggle for existence, are gradually beginning to follow literary occupations, and to acquire that knowledge which in former times was the monopoly of the privileged caste; and this circumstance is sure to make the competition keener for the literary classes even in their peculiar sphere of activity. The Brahman enters the army or sets up a shop, or tills the field; the Kshatriya becomes a Surgeon, a Lawyer, or a Clerk. The continuity of hereditary drill breaks and the traditions of caste lose their force; the more each caste fits itself for the functions of the other, the less fitted does it become to perform its own. The truth of the principle I have been trying to establish may be illustrated by referring to the decay of some of our indigenous arts and industries. The decay is in a measure due to the changes which has taken place in the national taste as well as to the fact that Europe can supply similar or better commodities at a cheaper cost. But it is due also to the circumstances which are destroying the hereditary monopoly of our arts and industries by certain classes and families. Under the old *regime* a potter's son was always a potter, a weaver's son always a weaver, a musician's son always a musician. Mr. Galton has written a remarkable book to prove how the great powers of great artists, poets, writers, scientists, inventors, soldiers, were hereditary—traceable to the peculiar discipline of their families continued from generation to generation. In India this discipline lasted longest and went deepest. Each profession became a sort of caste, with its traditions, its pride, its points of honor. Within its limited sphere this system was favourable both to the development arts and industries and to their preservation. I have doubt it must have imprinted its effects upon the nerv

system of each class.\* But under the new *regime* no profession is the monopoly of any particular class. The potter's son reads and becomes a clerk and in his family the art of pottery dies. It is true that he does not cultivate his art because it does not pay, and acquires knowledge because it pays. But the effect is the same; the social aptitude dwindles away in proportion as the mind acquires other aptitudes. Thus it seems to me the decay of caste has, in a measure, contributed to the decay of genius in India, first, because it has taken men out of their peculiar grooves into different and unfamiliar grooves; secondly because so far as the literary class is concerned it has deprived it of rest and leisure, so essential to intellectual pursuits, by obliging it, instead of competing with its own compeers, to compete with other castes in the battle of life, thus diverting those energies which would otherwise go to the production of genius and originality into a variety of channels for the purpose of meeting the more complex wants of modern life.

The disintegrating effect of caste upon the intellectual powers of Indians is a passing phase of progress; and the very keen conditions of competition under which the hereditary excellences generated by caste are fast fading away, will in due course of time tend to the development of Indian intellect, and consequently to that of Indian genius, by freeing it from all artificial checks and restraints and by making in every walk of life, mental and moral fitness the test and measure of every other kind of fitness. The harm done to us by the break-up of the caste-discipline is a necessary price which we must pay for the better possibilities of the future.

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\* There are certain classes which furnish few recruits to the Indian Army, because through centuries of peculiar discipline they have lost warlike qualities.

The decline of religious belief, due to the influences of Western culture, is, in spite of the so-called revival of Hinduism, one of the most significant facts in the history of modern India, and is a potent element in the causes which are at the bottom of our mental and moral decadence. Great thoughts and great deeds are generally produced under certain fervour and enthusiasm, and religion supplies these. It is also the great support of morality; and no man ever became great who did not possess some moral qualities in an extraordinary degree. The thinker requires patience, calm, resolution, fortitude under circumstances when worldly interests clash with his vocation, courage to cast off without a pang his most cherished convictions as soon as their falsity becomes apparent, great control over the temptations of the flesh, a passionate devotion to his pursuit. He endures a sort of martyrdom, of which the world seldom hears—the martyrdom of working for years and years at certain ideas and then finding in the light of some other idea that they are quite wrong, that truth lies in a different direction, that he must gird up his loins to grapple with the problem in its newly revealed aspect, without casting one longing, lingering look behind to the wasted efforts of so many years. But resolution, courage, fortitude are moral attributes of the highest order, and require for their development an atmosphere which is generally favourable to morality. And morality has been so closely connected with religion, since history began, that whenever the religious sanction has grown weak, serious moral injuries have occurred to mankind. Even the Protestant Reformation, which was pre-eminently a spiritual movement, was followed by a dissolution of public morals in those countries where the old religious and social institutions were somewhat too suddenly pulled down. The Ecclesiastical law was weakened, the old Church discipline disappeared. Luther himself lamented this phenomenon, and his wife said to him “Doctor, how is it, that in Popery we prayed so fervently, earnestly and often; but

now is our prayer quite cold, nay, we do not often pray ?”\* On the other hand, Puritanism affords a most striking instance of men rising above their ordinary selves under a strong religious fervour. Cromwell's Ironsides fought like heroes because they felt, as few nations have ever felt, that they lived ‘as in the presence of the great Taskmaster's eye.’ It is an acute remark of Bagehot regarding Cromwell's famous saying ‘Trust in God and keep your powder dry’ that the ‘trust in God’ was as necessary an element of his great military success as ‘the dry powder.’ It filled his soldier with a spiritual enthusiasm such as Europe had not witnessed since the Crusades. In India, the Sikh movement represented a wave of religious fervour and struck fire in the hearts of millions. Even in modern times, the greatest of our Reformers have been men of strong religious feelings. It is true that religion acts more upon character than upon intellect; but character in the long run acts upon the intellect. In spite of occasional and temporary variations and aberrations, there is always a certain correspondence between ideas and practices, and men absorbed in low and grovelling pursuits lose in course of time that tension of feelings which is a necessary excitant of bold thought. Genius suffers because the atmosphere of sensuality, luxury, and epicurianism is fatal to manliness and moral vigour. The English-taught generation of Indians dreads pain and self-sacrifice because in the absence of immediate human rewards here, it can draw no solace from faith in a hereafter. Many orthodox Hindus and Mehomedans can be found who will gladly lay down their lives for their religion, if need be. How many educated Indians are prepared to lose a hair of their whiskers for the new principles they profess? But a large capacity for suffering is an essential ingredient of greatness; and “the man of sorrows” has been the ideal of worship to the best of mankind for nineteen centuries. Our great teachers and leaders too were hammered on the anvils of fate; religious fervour

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\* National Life and Character.

dominated their lives; and under the impulse and inspiration of their faith they made those heroic efforts towards the light and the right which can never pass away from the memory of man.

It is perhaps impossible to revive that old religious spirit now; the conditions of modern life are not favourable to it; but no real greatness—either of intellect or of character—will grow in India, so long as the other powerful sentiment—the enthusiasm of humanity—does not arise to fill up the void and create an atmosphere sufficiently invigorating to high endeavour. The disruption of religion wrought a great havoc in France during the last century; but her leading men were at least inspired with an intense faith in human progress. “If the French who effected the Revolution” says De Tocqueville “were more incredulous than those of the present day in matters of religion, at least they had one admirable faith which the present generation has not. They had faith in themselves. They never doubted of the perfectibility and power of man: they were burning with enthusiasm for his glory; they believed in his worth. They placed that proud confidence in their own strength which so often leads to error, but without which a people is only capable of servitude: they never doubted of their call to transform the face of society and regenerate the human race. These sentiments and passions became like a sort of new religion to them, which, as it produced some of those great effects which religions produce, kept them from individual selfishness, urged them on even to self-sacrifice and heroism, and frequently rendered them insensible to all those petty objects which possess the men of the present day.”\* The moral of these words is plain. While the spirit of religion has declined, no secular enthusiasm has taken its place. We have lost faith in the service of God; but we have not yet acquired a sufficiently strong faith in the service of man.

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\* France before the Revolution.

Great intellects and great characters do not arise, because the lever which lifts up human life to higher planes of thought and action is wanting.

If there is anything which is patent to the most superficial observer of modern India, it is the suddenness with which the flood-gates of vast European knowledge have been opened upon it; and this in my opinion has not been altogether favourable to our mental originality. Before proceeding with this point any further, it may be well to refer here, in brief, to Mr. Pearson's interesting speculation by which it has been suggested to me. "It is surely not unreasonable to surmise that there are limitations in the nature of the universe which must circumscribe the achievements of speculative research. Every astronomer knows that there was only one secret of the universe to be discovered, and that when Newton told it to the world, the supreme triumph of astronomy was achieved. Whether Darwin or some one else shall have disclosed the other great mystery of the generation of life, it is none the less certain that all future triumphs will be insignificant by the side of the first luminous hypothesis. Chemistry rests, when all abatements have been made, on the atomic theory, and even if future investigation enables us to forecast with absolute precision what the result of combinations hitherto unattempted will be, so that we can calculate in the study what is now worked out gropingly in the laboratory, that discovery would hardly eclipse the merit of Dalton's contribution to science. .... Then, again, not only is science ceasing to be a prophet, but in virtue of her very triumphs, precisely because her thoughts are passing into the life-blood of the world, is she losing visible influence as a liberal education. .... Her possibilities can be pretty accurately summed up or forecast in an encyclopædia; and having delivered herself of her one imperishable protest against popular theology she has no other great moral truth to declare. If, however, science fails us, we shall be impoverished in that very region of intellectual toil from

which alone we have a right to expect exceptional results.”\* Those who want to know what can be said against this view — what are the infinite possibilities which lie before science — the most stirring questions in Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Psychology and other branches of speculation waiting to be handled by as masterful intellects as those who have brought scientific progress up to its present advanced stage, should read Professor Huxley’s essay on ‘the Progress of Science’ published in his volume on ‘Method and Results,’ and Laing’s ‘Problems of the Future.’ But whether Mr. Pearson’s speculation is an adequate explanation of the particular mental phase of European life with which he is dealing or not, it seems to me to throw an interesting light upon our own mental progress. The best and profoundest thoughts of Europe have come upon us in a flood; and by producing upon our minds the impression that science has delivered her best secrets, that the human intellect has made its best conquests, and that we at any rate cannot hope to produce anything new in those departments in which Europe has done its best, have repressed our mental energies in the field of speculative research and paralysed our powers of origination. The consciousness that we can hardly do anything in the higher regions of thought which has not already been done better elsewhere, deters many a man from entering those regions in right earnest. Besides vast amount of knowledge must be acquired before the origination faculty can work upon it. But there is a certain amount of antagonism between the power of assimilation and that of origination. The assimilative power of body and mind are strong in infancy and boyhood because they are so necessary for growth; but the procreating power of the body and the originating power of the mind begin to show themselves when the human organism ceases to grow. Children have stronger memories than grown up men; but when the powers of reason and reflection arise, the sharpness and

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\* National Life and Character.



retentiveness of memory lose their early vigour. The vast amount of European knowledge has put a heavy strain upon the acquisitive faculty of the present generation of Indians ; and thus in a measure retarded the progress of reason and reflection. They originate too little because they are busy in acquiring too much. This of course has bred cram which has brought show and shallowness in its train. Then again a close ally of memory is mimicry which also is strong in childhood, and is more or less strong always. Imitativeness has played a great part in the history of civilization, and has contributed largely to the formation of diverse types of thought, fashion, and national character. It is very active in India now. European types of thought European modes of life are the fashion of the day. Those who follow these types are liked and favoured; those who do not are disliked and discarded. The writer who satisfies the fashion of the day is read, admired, and imitated ; the writer who does not do this, is ignored, passed by on the other side. European speculations are considered fashionable—why I need not stop to inquire—and therefore the slightest variations from them are discouraged. Still all originality is variation ; Indian thought in order to be original must in some degree vary from European thought, it must be somewhat different from the accepted type. It cannot be this, because there is no other type of thought, strong enough to modify European thought which is now in vogue. The Indian mind has ceased to be original because the current fashion will not tolerate originality, and the current fashion is so tyrannical because for the present it has no equally powerful competitor in the field.

In this sketch, meagre as it is, of the causes of the decay of genius in modern India. it is necessary to include the Educational system under which the present generation of Indians has been brought up. It is impossible to examine at length or with any degree of fulness its nature and in-

fluence at the end of a paper which has already grown too long ; but one or two observations, indicating the view I take of this question, it may be permissible to make in this place.

If the object of sound Education is to create in the minds of its recipients the intensest love of truth and to evolve from it the greatest quantity of mental vigour, then our Educational system has proved itself incompetent to impart it to us—and this in four ways—Firstly, it tries to teach too many things, even at a stage when only one or two things can be taught with any degree of efficiency. To a certain extent it is necessary that the student should know something of many things, so as to be able at an advanced stage of his college career, to choose the particular subject or subjects of study which he likes most, and for which he possesses special aptitude. But when that stage is reached the-something-of-everything principle must cease, and specialisation must begin. Our Universities stop general training too soon, and continue an imperfectly specialised course of studies too long. The principle of 'bifurcation' begins in the Entrance class, when it should not begin ; it lasts through the B. A. class in the form of three subjects, when in order to ensure efficiency only one subject should be taught. The consequence is that while by losing the advantage of general culture at an early stage of his education, the student is unable to make any rational choice of special subjects of his study when the proper time comes; he finds himself equally unable to profit by the specialising process at the second and later stage of his progress, as instead of being allowed to devote his undivided energies and attention to one branch of knowledge, he has to prepare himself in three. Secondly, its method of teaching is defective. There can be no good teaching without trained teachers ; and these are as yet a rare luxury in India. Cram succeeds in examinations, because the average Professor in India does not know how to distinguish between real and

spurious ability in his pupils. To this fact more than to the low standard of Education must be attributed the incompetency of the majority of Indian graduates in English as well as other branches of training. When knowledge is not digested and assimilated but bolted and crammed—when students know that they have to deal with a set of examiners who will pass them, so long as they are well up in their professor's notes and abridgements, even if they have never tried to master their text-books—it is no wonder if our graduates learn so little, and cease to cherish any taste for knowledge as they leave the College-room. Thirdly, while moral training forms no part of the public instruction, and while social surroundings and home influences are not generally favourable to the mental and moral development, of our students, the personal influence of the teacher—the most potent factor in every sound system of education—is also wanting. The Moulvi or the Pundit to whom the youth of the country resorted in former times for such knowledge as was then accessible and necessary, impressed his individuality upon his pupils, by setting before them the example in his own life of what a true scholar should be. The ideal was defective and mutilated, but it moulded the life and character of the young through the magnetism of personal influence. Few English Professors can claim to exercise this influence over their Indian students. And yet if young men find no real scholarship in their teachers, no trace of the temper of a true lover of knowledge, nothing to stimulate their intellect, to exalt their ambition, to chasten their sympathies, if they do not feel themselves raised and purified by his contact—attached to him by feeling of respect for his high attainments, and of love for his noble conduct, in what quarter should they look for mental and moral support when they turn, if even for a moment, from those conditions of their home and society which deaden the intellect and

debase the moral sense? If they never know by personal experience what a real scholar means—what it is to devote oneself to knowledge with the fervour of a religious fanatic—how great virtues are practised and what sacrifices they entail; if they are not taught to love what is good and true, when young and before the rough contact of the world has dulled their mental and moral susceptibilities, rest assured that they will never grow to be good and great. Fourthly, there is hardly any endowment of research in India hardly any inducement for Indian youths to devote themselves with scholarly zeal and for scholarly purposes to the cultivation of any branch of science or art after their College career is over. If a student after taking his degree wants to cultivate any branch of knowledge for some time, he must starve, as his University can hardly render him any assistance. To these four circumstances—the character of the knowledge taught, the methods by which it is taught, the absence of the personal influence of teachers, and the lack of any provision for those who may be inclined to continue their scholarship after the close of the College career—I attribute in a large measure, the failure of our present University system in producing an adequate quantity of intellectual genius or in raising up great characters in the country. This is a great subject requiring a separate treatment; but I could not fitly close this essay without referring to it; and if some times ‘the half is better than the whole,’ even this brief and passing reference may, I trust, be of some use to those who can speak upon it with far greater authority than I can claim.

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### RATAN NATH (SARSHAR) A STUDY. \*

The first writer of Urdu fiction, who as yet remains the unsurpassed master of his art has passed away from our midst. The magic pen of Ratan Nath Dar will write no more. On the 27th January he died at Hyderabad, a thousand miles from his home, without a friend to shed a tear by his lonely bed, and to hear his last sigh of final pain. Of his death, the Indian press with the exception of a few brief and formal obituary paragraphs that it deigned to insert in its columns took little notice. The passing away from earth of one who was a unique figure in Urdu literature, 'unwept, unhonored and unsung' is all the more remarkable, for among competent judges his undoubted merits are generally recognised, and he has left a host of writers who, although never pretending to hide their light under a bushel, have yet derived it from his incandescent genius. No one denies now, indeed, no one has ever doubted that Ratan Nath Dar is the founder of the Urdu Novel. After a quarter of a century which has witnessed the births of hundreds of Urdu novels of all sorts which ingenuity or eccentricity could suggest, he yet remains unapproached and unapproachable in the line which he chalked out for himself. It is equally admitted that he was a master of the Urdu tongue. His name and Sir Syed Ahmad's must remain for ever associated with the development, cultivation, and expansion of Urdu, although as a man of letters, pure and simple, he was even superior to Sir Syed Ahmad. As a humourist he has had no equal in our generation, and only one in the last—Ghalib of Delhi, not his equal, but his superior in the finer touches of humor, although inferior to him in the spontaneous flow of inexhaustible wit. It seems therefore rather remarkable that the loss of such rare talents should fail to evoke adequate expression of grief from the Urdu world of letters—specially at a time when it can ill afford to lose any of those who are its ornaments. Surely there must be some explanation of this, some reason why an author who has amused a whole generation of Urdu knowing men, when he dies is not missed by them. It is I think possible to explain this phenomenon, and I shall, in my own way, venture to do so.

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Ratan Nath Dar, known by his poetical nom de plume of Sarshar wrote in, what according to a phrase of recent origin may be called literary Urdu, and literary Urdu is the language of educated Mohammadan as Ratan Nath himself is not tired of reminding us over and over again in his books. The Mohammadans as a class have a prejudice, based no doubt upon a sub-stratum of truth, that the Urdu of an educated Hindu cannot be so good as that of an educated Mohammadan, and they rather doubt their senses than modify their judgment when they see any specimen of good Urdu written by a Hindu pen. No reflection is here intended to be cast upon the taste and fairness of Mohammadans, among whom are to be found some of the most ardent admirers of Ratan Nath's genius, but a simple fact is stated which will be perfectly intelligible to those who have heard the legend that Nasim's *Masnavi* was composed by the great poet Atash. It is no wonder therefore, that the press which expresses the voice of common people when it is not its echo, should hesitate to express its due appreciation of a Hindu writer who wrote in Urdu.

His fame has also suffered because he was indifferent to it, and because he lived a life which in this country seldom brings celebrity if not fame, to a man of letters. Those who knew him know that he composed almost all of his works in a manner that only one utterly careless of notice and fame could have done. To publish book after book without revising a single manuscript page or correcting a single proof-sheet, does not show any very great craving for fame or even celebrity, and this is what Ratan Nath Dar did all his life. But he did more, he never sought the means by which alone he could obtain the passport to honor and fame.

He did not attach himself to any native court or seek the patronage of any chief as many inferior men, who thereby attained greater distinction and greater celebrity have done. In the old society which still lingers at our native courts, this is the path way which leads to renown, however short-lived that renown may be. A few years before his death Ratan Nath Dar, doubtless, went to Hyderabad to better his position under the patronage of the court there, but no better proof can be given of what I have said as regards, his indifference to what has been called 'the last infirmity of noble minds,' than his utter failure in attaining his object due partly to

his intemperate habits but partly also to his inability to adapt himself to his new surroundings. Even in his sanest and healthiest days Ratan Nath Dar could never have been a good courtier. The tact and the temper were both wanting to him. The generosity of a Hindu minister did indeed save him from ruin, but it could do no more. And so it happens that while the greatest Urdu poet now living is the recipient of such marks of distinction as reflect no little credit upon his royal patron, the greatest master of Urdu fiction dies under the shadow of the same prince's court in poverty if not in utter misery.

But the prejudice of the contemporaries and the absence of adventitious aids may for a time be able to keep down an author's fame, they can never wholly extinguish it, or even permanently and materially diminish it. It is not that Ratan Nath Dar's celebrity has suffered in this generation only, but there is no reason to believe that even in the eyes of posterity his fame is not likely to stand as high as considering his great literary talents alone, it deserves to do. Ratan Nath was, as I have said, a man of letters, pure and simple, and during the whole course of his life he never interested himself in or identified himself with any of the movements of thought or action, which have engaged the sympathies, stimulated the energies and fired the imagination of the men of his generation—movements which have made Syed Ahmad a prophet, and Swami Dayanand a martyr. Our present day movements—social, religious, moral and political, need literary and artistic interpreters who will enter into the spirit of those movements, who will feel their influence not only passively, but actively, will throw themselves into the struggles which are to carry them onward and forward, and which like so many contributory streams serve to swell the mighty current, which is to bear our race on to far off shores. No writer, however rare his talents, can hope to leave an abiding influence behind him, who is not possessed by the spirit of the age he lives in, to whom the earnest convictions of his generation are of no consequence, or only objects of good-natured laughter, who fails to realise the under-current of seriousness which is always present beneath the follies and frivolities of the most foolish and frivolous of ages, and whose art, however amusing and entertaining, does not reflect,

in its higher moods, the inner longings and aspirations, the hidden trends and tendencies of his generation. Ratan Nath Dar lived in most exciting times, in a welter of dogmas and beliefs he stood between a world not quite dead, and another struggling to be born,<sup>\*</sup> but he remained unmoved and untouched and watched the mighty transformation as one watches the shifting scenes of a pantomime. To him the whole thing was a show, a funny show, at which he could laugh and make his readers laugh; but the serious and pathetic side of which he never understood, nor could he make his readers understand.

Still, although Ratan Nath did not heed "the obstinate questionings" of the age, and was not moved by the passions which thrilled through every nerve and fibre of his generation, yet they all cast their reflections upon his mind, as upon the bosom of a calm and clear lake, and as from there they are transferred in vivid and realistic colours to his pages with photographic exactness, the unwary reader is apt to fall into the delusion that the objective picture before him is a representation of the subjective state of the writer's mind. But let him realise once the tone, in which the most serious subjects are discussed, his profane jestings at the most sacred things, the studied, contempt with which the most venerable institutions are treated, the Rabelaisian laughter with which he greets the agonies of dying faiths and ruined convictions, the jokes, the ribaldries, the profane allusions with which he covers the tenderest of sentiments, let him realise all this once, and he will find it for ever impossible to believe that the writer of these things ever knew what he was writing about, was at all capable of understanding the serious aspects of matters over which he has poured his ridicule in torrents, and could ever have felt in his own mind the shock of the new forces that have thrown into confusion the peace and the happiness of millions of Indian homes.

Every body is more or less a child of his age, and although Ratan Nath was incapable of feeling within himself and, therefore, of interpreting to others the influence of subtler and deeper forces which are

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<sup>\*</sup> Matthew Arnold. *Editor.*



shaking the Indian society, yet the levity, the spirit of irreverence, and iconoclasm, the epicureanism, and the discontent, though of a passive sort, with the existing order that mark his times he fully shared, and nobody need cast a doubt upon his utter sincerity, when he saturates his works with them and invests them with a thousand charms which his art can supply. But in this respect he renders no ineffective aid to the new liberal movement which is dissolving the bonds of traditional beliefs and time-honoured conventions. In the evolution of every society there comes, a stage when ridicule is as effective as anathema against current errors, when to make vice stand naked on the public stage is to make it feel ashamed. A good joke sometimes kills errors which no sermon can touch, and a sneering laugh not seldom 'shoots folly as it flies'\*. We have all experienced this. Some old-fashioned man in all seriousness and earnestness expatiates upon the hidden virtues of some belief or institution, we do not agree with a word of what he says, but the time is not suited for serious argument; there are too many dull, grave, grey haired people in the meeting. What happens? Some reckless, high-hearted fellow gets up and makes a joke. Some frown, a few are shocked, but a good many people,—even grave and grey-haired people for such is the contagion of laughter exciting power laugh; and once the joke is tolerated and the people are allowed to laugh with impunity, the old belief is doomed. Ratan Nath, whenever he comes in contact with the preacher the moralist, the advocate of caste, the old aristocrat,—the man who traces his descent to Mahomad or Tamerlane, and listens to their sermons, exhortations and protests, shows no disposition to argue with them or quarrel with them, and although the serious people are scandalised and offended thereby, yet the watching crowd laughs, and by laughing allows itself to be half-vanquished by the joker, and thence forward those who have laughed with the joker can never weep with the preacher of the old gospel. This is the way of Ratan Nath. He jokes, he laughs, he conquers. In this respect we may count him as one of the disintegrating forces in our society, He did not identify himself with any particular movement; his temper was not the temper of a prophet or a reformer, he was at bottom a jester and a trifler. But he was a child of his age, and his jesting and trifling

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\* *As you Like It*. Editor.

sprit, aided by his ready and trenchant wit, and wonderful powers of expression, was always employed in the cause of liberalism, and it was all the more effective because it was directed towards a particular section of Indian society, upon which serious arguments (assuming that Ratan Nath was capable of advancing them) would have been thrown away, and whose follies did not deserve to be corrected by any less carnal weapon than the irreverent jesting of a born jester.

Whatever criticism or strictures may be passed on Ratan Nath as a teacher and instructor of his age, his high position in Urdu literature is secure. And in order fully to appreciate what he has achieved there, we must recall the state of Urdu literature as it was more than a generation ago. What was then understood by Urdu literature was contained in its poetry. Lucknow and Delhi had produced a series of brilliant poets who although they worked within narrow and circumscribed limits, yet within these limits produced works which are simply inimitable. Yet they were weighted with obsolete and mischievous conventions of their art, and had few ideas. Beyond the beauty of form and the charm of melody they looked for nothing else, and the circumstances of their age did not allow them to look for anything else. Urdu language, even before it had cast off the swaddling clothes of its infancy, began to feel itself sufficiently strong to support itself without exporting food from sources outside the limits of its family domain, and grew jealous of the intrusion of foreign ideas and foreign tongues. The result was that its development was arrested, whatever originality there was in it died out with the earlier Urdu poets, and the later poets became contented with being mere imitators. What new development Urdu would have undergone had the Mohammedan regime lasted up to the present time it is hard to tell, but any development of its prose would in all likelihood have taken the colour of its poetry, judging from the fate of the Persian prose during the latter days of Mahomedan rule, and would have become cramped, artificial, concerned with words not with ideas, sterile, ineffectual, unpractical. At this stage a remarkable political transformation ushered in a flood of new ideas needing new forms of expression, and the first man probably who realised the nature of the crisis and, responding to its call, inaugurated what may be called "the liberal movement" in Urdu literature was Seyed Ahmed, who casting aside

the trammels of obsolete literary conventions, laid the foundations of an Urdu prose, elastic enough and comprehensive enough to give expression to the practical and speculative ideas which the new social and political condition had called into existence. Syed Ahmed is the founder and as yet indeed the past master of a style in which since his day all writers have written upon subjects of speculative and practical importance, religion, morals, politics, economics, education.

The imaginative prose, the rudiments of which existed during the latter days of the Mohamedan regime, found its greatest master in Ratan Nath Dar. I do not forget Ghalib who stands by himself between Syed Ahmed and Ratan Nath Dar. His letters are perfect models of classical Urdu, but I doubt if the style is suited to our highly complex modern life. Ratan Nath Dar has fashioned a style, the naturalness of which is beyond question, and which at the same time possesses charms which make it fitted more than any other style that I know of in the whole range of Urdu literature, for the composition of imaginative and artistic works.

Ratan Nath Dar, it is true, had before him the masterpiece of Rajab Ali Suroor, but his works have shown how an original literary genius can overcome the despotism of a reigning style by supplying his age with a higher and truer model. He has made the revival of Suroor's style, because he has produced a style which possesses all the graces of Suroor, and in addition the elasticity and spontaneity, the variety and audacity, of which Suroor never dreamt. In reading Suroor you feel that you are reading a paraphrase of books like Bahar Danish and Minabazar; nature is everywhere sacrificed to conventionality and sentiment to literary grace. In the pages of Ratan Nath Dar you perceive a revolt at times an unnecessary revolt, against the past masters and are introduced into a world of thought and sentiment which, he, like another Columbus, has discovered for the Urdu-knowing generations. I must not omit to mention here the name of the Oudh Punch, which in its earlier days represented some of the first rate wits and writers, which was a powerful factor in the school of which Ratan Nath was the head, and which was probably the first organ in Urdu, of new and unconventional criticism, but which by a strange irony of fate, levelled, for years, its bitterest and most

trenchant criticism against an author, whom more than any other it was bound to honor and follow and who, it is pleasant to remember, never treated its criticism with anything but good-natured grace, and long after the memory of these criticisms had passed away, was on terms of friendship with its Editor.

*Fasana-i-Azad*, Ratan Nath's greatest work, is one of the most remarkable productions of the reaction which heralded the dawn of a new era in Urdu literature. From the time its first instalment appeared as a supplement to the *Oudh Akhbar*, of which Ratan Nath was the editor, it captivated the public mind. It was the first work written after the fashion of modern European novels, it has been the most popular book of our generation and its popularity is well-deserved. In order to form a just estimate of that work, two things have to be borne in mind. First, that it was never meant to be a regular novel in the sense of being a story with a definite plot, with a beginning, a middle, and an end, but a series of disconnected pictures of the life and manners of the society in which the author lived, moved and had his being. The early chapters of the book clearly revealed the nature of its original plan. To cast it into the form of a connected narrative was an after-thought, the fruit, as it is easy to see now, of the author's wrong estimate of his genius. The work would have been infinitely better if he had not turned it into a story, for the telling of a story with a well-conceived plot, and with a due sense of proportion was not in his line. He was an unrivalled painter of the isolated aspects, the separate fragments of our social life; but he could not fuse them into a single, symmetrical whole; he could not take up the various threads and weave out of them a consistent and intricate plot. Secondly, the life and manners which the book delineates are the life and manners of a very small fragment of the Indian society; they are the life and manners of the Lucknow society, and even then, more particularly of the Mohammadan section of it. It may properly be called the novel of Lucknow society, although there is hardly any phase of our social life which is not touched in it, or hardly any class of Indians, from whom the author has not borrowed some character. But a better picture of Lucknow life does not exist

anywhere in Urdu literature; and its interest is enhanced all the more, when we consider that it is the picture of a state of things which is rapidly passing away, the delineation of a life which is fast entering upon a new stage of evolution.

The Mohameden Court at Lucknow was one of the most brilliant that had ever been seen in India before. It arose on the ruins of the Delhi Court, and outshone it in outward splendour and pomp. Whatever may have been the political condition of the kingdom of Oudh, its capital was the cynosure of all India. There was wealth, luxury, gaiety, frivolity dancing and music on all sides, gallant men and amorous women, life glided on a path of roses through fragrant orange groves, cheered by the music of songs and led by the sportive leaders of the rosy hours, and the land of the lotus-eaters seemed but a pale reflection of the fairy-land in which thousands passed their lives in mirth and laughter. Princes and noblemen, courtiers and grandees of state, lapped in luxury and waited on by the splendours of the world, presented a magnificent spectacle to the eye; verily Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But this was too much for poor human nature; and too good to last long. The cup of immorality became full-luxury and profligacy sapped the foundations of the state; the unbridled indulgence of the passions, the crimes and follies of misapplied wealth, brought on their inevitable consequences, and the kingdom sank under the burden of its iniquities. Oudh was annexed by the British Government, but the race of men to which Lucknow owed its brilliance, pomp and show, remained. A large class of the old aristocracy and nobility got handsome hereditary pensions or *wasikas*; and a still larger class of their dependents and followers retained their old habits, tastes, and mode of life. The *wasikedars* have since become a most prominent feature of Lucknow, and much of its outward show and magnificence is owing to their reckless extravagance. The spell of luxury is upon them, and with plenty of money in their pockets and no serious work on their hands they give the reign to their fleshly instincts, and indulge in all the refinement of luxury which even Paris would not despise. Concubinage is no vice but a badge of fashion, and a taste for quail-fighting and kite-flying is a sure indication of noble birth. Men have their mistresses and

women their lovers; and a taste for wine is rapidly developing itself and opium-eating and smoking is still a fashionable pastime. Extravagance is ruining hundreds of families—hundreds have already been ruined, but the old habits persist; the desperate struggle against modern civilization is maintained; the barbarism of the European intruder is hated and despised; children are allowed to grow up to adult age on their nurse's arms; and the very idea of manliness is kept out of their minds by the ladies of the harem. If the Nawab goes out for a drive, angels and ministers of heaven are invoked to protect him from unforeseen calamities; if he falls ill, half a dozen men or women who are supposed to have communication with the spirit world are employed to drive away the evil spirit or undo the effect of the incantation practised by some of his enemies. There are noble natures in this class, gifted with fine qualities, courtliness, kindness, pity, generosity, an inborn aversion to inflicting and causing pain, refined tastes of love of beauty, a sentimental regard for the honour and dignity of their birth and position. But, otherwise, they are steeped in ignorance, insensible to the cardinal elements of morality, unmanly and unenergetic, mean in body and meaner in spirit, given to indecent ways and sensual habits. But sensuality goes ill with poverty, and so we have in Lucknow a large class of men, who till the other day were rolling in riches, but who to day are sunk in the most abject poverty, whose misery is all the most pitiable because poverty has not killed in them the promptings and propensities of more prosperous days, and who are fast dying out because they seem not to have in them the power to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances of the age

It is this society which Ratan Nath Dar has delineated in *Fasana-i-Azad* and in almost all the books which he subsequently wrote, with pitiless realism, and so much of that society has disappeared in the course of a generation, since his first novel was published, that nobody can fully realise it who does not look for a picture of it in his pages. The chief merit of *Fasana-i-Azad* and its highest interest for a student of history and human nature lies in this, that of all the books which have yet been written in Urdu (or, I may say in any other language), it is the one, wherein as in a mirror, is reflected vividly and faithfully the life of Lucknow as it was a generation ago, or, as with some its features blunted by time, it is even to-day.

There is only one great master of Urdu prose who had described it before, but the difference which in this respect exists between Suroor and Sarshar is not only vast, but throws an interesting light upon the distinctive peculiarities of their genius. There is more compactness, symmetry, gracefulness, in the descriptions of Lucknow which Suroor has given us in his *Fisani Ajaib* than in anything which Sarshar ever wrote. But Suroor describes things not men. We pass by the confectioner's shop and our mouth waters, by the betel-seller's and we see that it is good, by the milk and creamshop and feel sure that the Lucknow cream is better than Devonshire cream, the pedlar, the lace-maker, the jeweller, the grocer, they all keep first-rate, shops; the chowk and several other bazars and promenades which have disappeared since Suroor's time we all see and walk through; we gaze at the magnificent buildings, we cast admiring glances at the lovely faces looking down with their soft voluptuous eyes from their balconies upon the scene below; we feel we are in an enchanted place, but we also feel that the men and women we are looking at are lying in a magnetic sleep. We are in a crowd, but we are not hustled and jostled by it; the lovely woman on the balcony does not return our glance, the betel-seller is a regular flirt, yet she won't talk to us, the grocer is deaf, the pedlar is dumb, and we may run away with all the sweets in our pockets for the confectioner is fast asleep. There is no life anywhere—we are introduced to the famous musicians and performers of the day, but we hear no music, great poets, statesmen, soldiers, wrestlers, all sorts of odd and eccentric characters pass before us like the row of shadowy figures in a phantasmagoria, but they have no life in them. The author has painted them after putting them under the influence of chloroform. Of Suroor, therefore, I say that he has described Lucknow lying in a state of trance, like the enchanted city in Tennyson's "Day Dream" where, "more than a picture seemeth all". As is that city, so in Lucknow as described by Suroor:

"Here sits the butler with a flask,

Between his knees half-drained; and there,

The wrinkled steward at his task;

The maid of honor blooming fair;

The page has caught her hand in his ;

Her lips are covered as to speak ;

His own are pouted to a kiss ;

The blush is fixed upon her cheek."

Sarshar describes Lucknow life in all its phases, high and low, rich and poor ; and his men and women are living, moving, talking, laughing beings. If you go into his crowds—noisy, rowdy, bustling, hustling crowds—you have to take care that you are not knocked down by the rush behind, that you do not lose your watch, and that your pockets are not picked. He describes Moharram or Chehlum or the Aish-bag fair, and there you find yourself in a motley throng, quail-fighters, kite-flyers, opium-eaters, Nawabs with their oddly dressed, emaciated, pale-looking retainers, dancing girls driving in pheatons and landaus, exchanging amorous glances with some fantastically dressed old rake riding on an elephant ; the host of beggars running after every carriage, some with blessings, some with curses on their lips ; impecunious lovers and foopish loungers ; ugly and pretty women of all ages, one crying for her missing child, another quarrelling with her paramour, a third flirting with Nawab Sahib's gallant boon companion, the police-man, the thief, the Octroi Maharrir, the Railway Baboo, the Thakur who has come from a neighbouring village to see the fair, the Lala who is pouring his wealth of Persian knowledge into the lap of the betel seller, the anglicised graduate with a cigarette in his mouth, the new fashioned Mohammedan with a Turkish fez on his head, the Bengali whose soft thin dhoti seems to unfurl the flag of defiance at every rush of the crowd. This is the motley crowd in which you are introduced, the din of a thousand voices is in your ears, and around you the seething and surging of a vast mass of living, moving, chatting, clamouring humanity, and the beauty of it is that each type is distinctly brought before you, by the manner in which he talks and acts—the thief has his own sinister looks and passwords ; the Lala can never forget his Persian with which he has so often confounded his wife and servant, the Nawab must lean upon his Mosaheb's arm and look awfully miserable before his mistress ; the Thanadar is bound to be active whenever he sees some dancing girl's carriage jammed in a crowd ; the opium-eater must talk nonsense—and the



Bengali Babu must laugh and shriek as he sees another Bengali laughing and shrieking—at what it does not matter.

Sarshar, as a delineator of Lucknow life differs from Suroor in this respect also, that while the latter idealises his picture, touching up its bright features and suppressing the darker ones, telling every thing that is pleasant of Lucknow, and nothing that may be offensive or unpleasant, the former gives you an accurate picture of it with the good and bad points all brought out in clear relief; his intensely realistic pen leaves out nothing, the whole picture is painted in bold Rembrandtish colours; there are bright lights but there also deep shadows. This is not always permissible by the highest art, which refines and idealises; the first aim of which is beauty, and the highest achievement of which is to find it in the meanest and most revolting objects. In the domain of art it is dangerous to follow truth too near the heels.' But it is one of the chief defects of Ratan Nath's art, that it cannot discriminate between subjects which are fit subjects for its exercise and those which are not, that it often becomes grotesque, and not seldom indecent and obscene, and that even at its best it is apt to indulge in freaks which outrage good taste and become positively repulsive. This reserve made, Ratan Nath's Hogarthian pictures have an interest and a charm of their own. They are natural, bold, unconventional, and therefore, original; they occasionally offend the taste but they also reveal new possibilities of its development. With Suroor we seem to stand by the side of an artificial canal, cut across a park in which only pure water is allowed to flow, and on the banks of which roses bloom and orange groves shed their perfume. Sarshar makes us stand by the side of a mighty river with the play of wind and wave about it, and the murmur of wild forest on its banks, but now and again offensive and unclean things also floating past us upon the surface of its stream. The artistic peculiarity of each of these two writers seems to stand in the relation of cause and effect to his natural idiosyncrasy and peculiar social ideal. Suroor's picture is pleasing and graceful because he was satisfied with the life he describes; he loves it and sees nothing wrong in it, and so naturally he likes to have a lovely image of that which he loves. Sarshar is dissatisfied with the society he paints—indeed in some respects he is quite disgusted with it; and he does not conceal his dissatisfaction and disgust in the picture

of it which he paints. Hence we may say that while Surroor represents the conservative school and belongs to the past, Sarshar represents the liberal movement in literature, the movement which marks the return of art from conventionality to nature—and he, therefore, belongs to the present and the future. Surroor's art is losing, Sarshar's is gaining ground as the years roll on, for the one contented himself with tickling the emotional susceptibilities of men, while the other has in it the power and potency to appeal to their imaginative reason.

Another great peculiarity which distinguishes the Fisanai-Azad from all the Urdu works of fiction in prose and poetry is that it embodies the first successful attempt in Urdu to create interest in fiction without the aid of the supernatural and the miraculous. This is no small achievement, for while belief in the grossest forms of supernaturalism is at the bottom of the delight and interest we take in old romances, that belief is engendered, confirmed and perpetuated in thousands of young minds by the reading of those romances. There are thousands of men who still believe in Gul-i-Bakaoli, in fairy land and in regions peopled by demons. Some years ago I remember reading in a vernacular paper the discovery by some body of the spot underneath which the abode of Bakaoli lies. It was a bold step therefore to break the spell of supernaturalism at least in the domain of fiction. But the bold artist had also in him the witchery of a fertile imagination by which out of purely human materials he has constructed a story in four big volumes, without fairies and demons, and flying palaces and wonderful lamps and genii imprisoned in glass phials, which yet every one can read with rapt interest from the first pages to the last. There can be no interest in the plot of a story in which at every difficult turn elves and fairies are always ready to throw their weight into the scale and decide the critical issue. In this respect, Rattan Nath Dar has decidedly helped to educate the public mind on the right line, and he has been so far successful, that although supernaturalism still colors our dramas and is seen on the stage, yet from the numerous works of fiction which have followed his, it has almost wholly disappeared.

The plot of the story is very simple and by itself extremely uninteresting; but we read through more than 2500 closely printed pages of it, with eager and unabated interest, because of the artistic embellishments with which

the author clothes it, a style free and easy, fresh, illustrative, natural and vivid; delicate touches of humour, brilliant flashes of wit; racy jokes and telling reparties, inconceivable fooleries and drolleries, and an inexhaustible fertility of laughter-causing details. Azad the hero of the story is a young man of fortune and is the first character to whom we are introduced in the first chapter of the book, who through several succeeding chapters is a jovial young fellow, cultured and inquisitive, with a pair of observing eyes in his head, somewhat lax in orthodox principles, given to soft voluptuous dreams of youth, but infected with the modern spirit. Accidentally he falls in with a beautiful lady of fortune, Husna-Ara, is smitten with her charms and in a moment is over head and ears in love with her. He pays his court to her, after sometime is accepted, and obtains from her the promise of marriage on the condition of his first proceeding to Turkey to join the Sultan's army and fight against the Russians. Surely this is the revival of the chivalrous sentiment of the Crusades with a vengeance. However Azad obeys the command of her lady-love, fights the Russians, returns home victorious, and wins the glorious reward for which he has dared and suffered so much. This is the whole story, and it is as thin and insipid a story as has ever emanated from the brain of man. But read it as it is narrated by Ratan Nath Dar—a regular picture gallery as he has made of it, the variegated hues of art with which he has painted it, the irresistible witchery of words with which he has clothed it, the wealth of imagination which he has lavished upon it, the bustle and animation which he has imparted to a hundred scenes, and you perceive, half believing half doubting your senses, a rich and gorgeous vision rising up before you, as Prospero waves his magic wand.

The main interest of the book, however, lies in its varied details and accessories, in its isolated scenes, in the incidental outbursts of wit and humour, in its odd and amusing characters. And we may here remark that almost all his characters—with the exception of Husna-Ara and one or two other ladies and possibly of Azad, are caricatures—not, pictures drawn from real life. Ratan Nath knew his strength here. He was not a good portrait painter, but he was a consummate caricaturist. Within the narrow limits of his own sphere he was a compound of Dickens and Thackeray. In high life and in low

life, he could seize upon the odd points of a man's character and draw out of them an inexhaustible fund of laughter. In looking at those characters you do not inquire whether they are possible; it is enough that they make you laugh, so much so that your dull, demure, serious-minded friends begin to grow anxious about you as they see you walking along a road, with your face flushed up with suppressed laughter, because the image of Khoji happens just at that moment to fit through your memory. Khoji the old fool, the faithful friend of Azad, the ridiculous prig, the impudent bully, the foppish idiot, the shameless rake, the swaggering rascal and yet withal the man in whom the germs of goodness have not quite died out, and who, although a coward and never tired of bragging like Falstaff, after he has fled from the scene of strife, "And thus I bore my point", yet who almost overcomes his natural cowardice when he sees his friend and master Azad in peril, Khoji, who in some respects is even a more interesting character than Azad, is in Urdu perhaps the most original and wonderful creation of humorous art. He is a masterly caricature of a type of character, so common at one time, and even now to be found among the parasites of the Nawabs, and without him we do not know how any body would have the patience to read through some 2500 pages of a story without a plot. There are other characters very skilfully drawn in the *Fisani Azad* and in other works of the author, but none in which his art reaches so high a perfection. The Kayastha community has furnished him with some very amusing types of character, which have called forth some of the happiest strokes of his genius. The Kayastha, it must be admitted, although possessing some solid and sterling qualities of head and heart, has yet got something odd and angular about him, something funny in his manners and queer in his looks, from which some of the less-gifted classes are free, and therefore, while owing to the flatness of their features they do not attract the attention of the humourist and the caricaturist, his superficial deviations from the normal type of our polite society lend themselves to caricature and become fit subjects for comical treatment, Ratan Nath was not likely to miss this type, and has made it the subject of his comical, at times, cruel jokes. But there is nothing cynical, sardonic

or malignant in his humour, which is as a rule inoffensive, and always good-natured, sometimes farcical and boisterous, often degenerating into buffoonery, but seldom bitter and misanthropical.

While these are some of the principal merits of Fisanai Azad it has some positive defects as a work of art. We have already noticed that the book has no plot; but what is still worse is that there is no unity in the arrangements of the incidents and details which have been brought together to give a sort of consistency to the whole. There are scores of chapters which have no logical order whatever, hundreds of incidents which have no organic connection with what precedes or what follows. And the confusion thus caused becomes all the more unbearable, as it is due in a large measure to the introduction of a considerable amount of superfluous and irrelevant matter which has no bearing upon the main story. nor possesses any independent charm of its own.

Again there is no logical consistency in his characters. They undergo a hundred metamorphoses in the course of the narrative; they are as a rule illogical, whimsical, possessing few ideas. Not that the whole wealth of ideas with which Ratan Nath was familiar is not scattered throughout the book; but they do not belong to his characters, neither do they belong to him, in the sense of having been assimilated and digested by him, but as he received them passively so he passed them on to the pages of his books. His memory is a store-house of facts and ideas, but the faculty of reason which could generalise from them is deficient. "Mamma, what shall I think about?" asked a little girl of an old lady. "Dear don't think" was the reply. The moment Ratan Nath begins to think, he loses himself in platitudes. The fourth volume of Fisanai Azad which covers over a thousand pages is to a large extent a compilation of tedious lectures on female education, theosophy and a dozen other subjects, and nowhere is the deficiency of his reasoning faculty more manifest than in that volume.

He is not only deficient in reason but even on his emotional side is wanting in pathos. He can make the most sour and saturnine natures laugh in spite of themselves, but he can never move the most tender-hearted to tears. No writer, as I think, can have in him the quality of pathos in a marked degree, who has not the vein of seriousness in his nature, and a

keen emotional sensitiveness to the play of human feelings and passions going on around him. The poet or the novelist must feel within himself what he wants his readers to feel; his mind must be like the *Æolian* harp responsive to the touch of every passing breeze of human emotion, his fine nerves must feel more than ours of coarser texture can.

"The weariness, the fever, and the fret,

Here, where men sit and here each other groan;

... ..

Where but to think is to be full of sorrow

And leaden-eyed despairs."\*

But to sympathise with other people's feelings is, as the psychologists tell us, to have those feelings within ourselves for the time being. But Ratan Nath's nature abhorred "the fever and the fret" and the "leaden-eyed despairs" of the world around him, he loved sunshine and the glories of the spring-tide, and his jovial nature ever with a frolic welcome took "the rebuffs of misfortune; and as he was, so he thought were his brother men. At any rate, the fact remains that his excessive joviality which drew its sap from his exuberant animal spirits choked the vein of seriousness in him and without seriousness there could be no pathos. A signal failure of Ratan Nath in this respect is to be found in the chapter in which he describes the death of Humayun Qadr. He was proud of that chapter, and told the present writer once that when that chapter was first published, his readers were so deeply affected by its intense tragic sentiment that many of them wrote to him that they could not endure a further continuation of that chapter. It may be so, but it may be permissible to state here, that most of his readers belong to the class of men who are generally seen sobbing and crying at our theatres during the performance of plays like "Indar Sabha," "Harish Chandar" and other equally rank balderdash. No, there is no pathos, no tragic interest, in the death of Humayun Qadr, but only "the trappings and the suit of woe," made up the of trite quotations, mechanical sentences, conceits, affectations. On the contrary, in the author's attempt in a later part of the story to atone for the pain he believed to have inflicted upon the fine nerves of his soft hearted readers by his tragic scenes, "to revive" Humayun, we seem to touch the climax of the ridiculous. ¶ Ratan Nath could laugh most heartily which

is no small gift, considering how few men do really possess it, and even under the pressure of want and privation could pant forth a flood of rapture in praise of love and wine; but I do not think he ever felt what wretches feel, or any body could make him comprehend Shelley's lines addressed to Skylark :

"If we were things born  
Not to shed a tear,  
I know not how thy joy  
We ever should come near."

Fisanai Azad is wanting not only in pathos, but in a high, pure, and persuasive moral tone, by which is not meant, on the one hand, that it does not conform to the ordinary canons of morality and offers any direct countenance to vice, nor, on the other, that it is defective, because it has no didactic purpose running through it. Virtuous qualities and acts are indeed described in glowing colours and extolled, but not because they are approved by the author's conscience and strike a chord in the deeper and more serious parts of his nature, but because they satisfy his taste, his good sense, his instinct for beauty, and any departure from them would jar upon his well-bred temper, would be unlovely, an outrage upon common-sense and refinement. His characters practise virtue not because they feel themselves living "as ever in the great task master's eye," but because the grosser forms of vice are so repugnant to the refined feelings of well-bred ladies and gentlemen. Morality to them is a question of decency and propriety, But the moment the didactic, the preaching, and and sermonising-fit comes upon them, and they begin to talk morality, they talk nonsense. Still it cannot be denied that the book, in many places, bears upon it the marks of coarseness and vulgarity, nay even obscenity and immorality. It takes one's breath away to read certain passages in which vice is glorified, and virtue is made to appear as natural appendage of stupidity. But we must judge Ratan Nath by the age he lived in, and the standard of morality current in the society which had shaped his character. Think of Fisanai Ajaib, Indar Sabha, Mir Hasan's Masnavi, Nasim's Masnavi, the exquisite but licentious poetry of Zahr-Ishq and scores of other Urdu books, written before his time and

since, and you will find that Ratan Nath Dar has not lowered but raised the moral tone in the domain of imaginative literature. In his book virtue triumphs over vice in the long run, although it may not always be quite clear to the reader as to how it did triumph in spite of the overwhelming temptations which the author placed in its way. There are many vices to which the Lucknow people are strongly addicted which the author has ridiculed and condemned; while there are many others to which certainly he lent no countenance. The impulse of his realistic genius was too strong for him to desist from crowding his canvas with pictures of all the phases of our social life; and so he has painted certain phases which he would have done better to leave out. Sterne once asked a lady if she had read *Tristram Shandy*. "I have not" replied, "and to be plain with you, I am informed it is not proper for female perusal." "My dear good lady" said he, "do not be guided by such stories; the book is like your young heir there (pointing to a little child rolling about on a carpet) he shows at time a good deal that is usually concealed, but it is all in perfect innocence." I do not think the same can exactly be said on behalf of Ratan Nath; but one observation in justice to him, may be made here. Indecency and obscenity are the marks of every literature which is not meant to be read by women. It is the gradually advancing education of women which has been one of the most purifying influences in every literature. Books meant for the eyes of men only are apt to contain much questionable matter which would not be there, if the writers thought that their and their friends' wives, and sisters, and daughters would read them. It is no wonder that Fisanai-Azad, when judged by the standard of an English novel, bears upon it the stamp of a serious blemish; but considering the age in which and the society for which it was written, it is in its tone and taste so far above the moral level reached by the very Urdu and Persian fiction, in prose or verse, written before its time, that it may justly be considered to mark an epoch in our imaginative literature.

But this, after all does not dispose of the main question: What is the moral worth of Ratan Nath Dar's work? Is its influence wholesome or mischievous upon our character? Has it raised and purified our social aims and ideals or debased and degraded them? This is a delicate question;



and in the case of such an author as Ratan Nath, writing such a book as *Fisani-Azad*, in such an age as ours, for such a society as we see in Lucknow, any answer that may be given to it is liable to be misunderstood. I do not presume to answer it, but I may be permitted to submit one or two considerations, which may be borne in mind by those who do. It is a common-place of literary criticism that the character of an author determines the bent of his genius. But the maxim has its limitations, and is a most unsafe guide in the hands of those whose sympathies are not broad enough to enable them to comprehend and appreciate characters different from the types they have been used to revere and admire. It is true that great thoughts come from the heart, and that when the heart is impure the thoughts also will be impure. But the meanest man carries in him some noble traits of character, so does the worst of authors. Every bad man does not want that those most near and dear to him should be infected with his badness; and likewise, a poet or an artist whose works are as children born unto him, is anxious that his faults do not pass on to them, but that they should be lovely and graceful, and live a pure and wholesome life. Undoubtedly the taint of his nature will show itself in his work, more or less; but it will be very much softened and subdued under his anxious and watchful care. No careful reader of his works can deny that Ratan Nath spared no pains to eschew from them those faults which proved the wreck of his own life. Even if he did not quite succeed in this, we must not forget that artists like ordinary mortals are a compound of good and evil. When the evil predominates, the work will be bad; but much will have to be forgiven to an artist in whose work the alloy does not altogether destroy the worth of the gold contained therein. Bacon, Sheridan, Byron, Rousseau, the Italian artists of the 16th Century, literary lights that shone round the throne of Louis XIV—these were not exemplary characters, but they left works from which many moral men have drawn inspiration, solace and sustenance. Who will cast the first stone at Ratan Nath? Certainly not those who admire European art and poetry, although it is only they who can properly judge him.

If we exaggerate the function of Art and make of it a direct instrument of religious and moral teaching instead of counting it as an indirect in-

fluence which by refining our tastes and quickening and purifying our sensibilities, prepares our minds for the appreciation of higher, social and moral ideals, then Ratan Nath's art must be condemned; and not only his art, but the art of the greatest masters, whoever worked with pen, pencil or easel. The beautiful is the [good; beauty is truth seen from another side—these are grand sayings which find their application perhaps once in a century. But the universal aim of all art is amusement—pure and healthy amusement, no doubt—but still amusement. Judged by this standard, Ratan Nath's art is not of a mean order. But, if following Matthew Arnold, we ask the yet further question, *viz*, Are we right in being amused with Ratan Nath's art? then it must be confessed that there is a good deal in it which it will not be right for us to be amused; which, indeed, must be separated and eschewed from it, before it can become a right and proper source of amusement. This much, however, may safely be remarked here that, although his art is not of the highest and suffers from serious blemishes, yet even from the point of view from which we are considering it now, it is far superior to any of which the present generation of Urdu novelists has as yet given any promise.

He has not taught us morality; indeed at times he seems to trample it under his feet; but to the Lucknow people he has opened a source of amusement much healthier than quail-fighting, much purer than the reading of obscene poems, more profitable than opium-smoking, and more intellectual than attending poetical tournaments. To improve the tone of a people's amusement is no small matter, because it inevitably tends to raise and purify the tone of their social life, Ratan Nath has done more; he has made the Lucknow life, as we see it, look awfully ugly, ridiculous, intolerable in the eyes of many of his readers. This indeed is a moral influence of a positive kind for which he is entitled to our lasting gratitude.

In giving an estimate of Ratan Nath's genius, I have confined myself to his prose works and even there to one book only, the *Fisanai-Azad*, although he has written more than two dozen books, not to mention his excellent translations of Wallace's *Russia* and Lord Dufferin's *Letters from Higher Latitudes*, and his work in poetry. There is no book of his which is not worth reading, and some of these in consistency and coherence

of plot and charm of style are even superior to Fisanai Azad. But in fertility of imagination, in rich variety of detail, in drawings of original characters, and in abounding humour it is his most typical novel the one book upon which his fame with posterity will ultimately rest. I have not the same high opinion of his poetry, although he held a high place in the rank of second-rate poets, and was certainly better than many who consider themselves in the first rank. I have left myself no space to notice his work as a journalist, although the palmiest days of the 'Oudh Akhbar'—the leading Urdu daily paper in India were the days of his Editorship.

Ratan Nath Dar has rendered service beyond price to Urdu literature, but the public has not properly recognised them, and has not rewarded him with the fame he deserved. For this his life is in no small measure responsible, specially the decadence of his powers in his later days. The young novelists who have learnt their art from him are in revolt against him. The critics have passed their summary judgments upon him. But he has achieved a solid work which the students of our life and manners no less than the lovers of Urdu literature will not willingly let die. Fisanai Azad will be as fresh fifty years hence, as it is to-day. The immortal pictures of our picturesque society will continue to amuse the coming generations. The critics and the literary amateurs may pick as many holes in his works as they please. They may withhold their patronage from him and refuse to him entrance into their Pantheon. But when the mists of silly and spiteful criticisms have cleared off, the figure of Ratan Nath Dar will be seen soaring above them all as the eagle soars above the bat and the buzzard.

## FOREIGN TRAVEL.

The question of foreign travel has, of late, come to assume considerable importance in the eyes of thoughtful Indians, because of the serious bearings it is felt to have on some vital and pressing problems of Indian life. It has many aspects each of which deserves a close and careful study. On its moral and mental side the movement of foreign travel, the going out of Indians into strange countries, among strange peoples, possessing strange civilization—is obviously closely connected with the great problem of our National Education. On its political side, it cannot but seriously modify our conceptions regarding the functions of Government and the rights of citizenship by giving us real and living examples of societies which have fashioned and perfected their political institutions upon models very different from those which have dominated the whole course of Asiatic history. On what may be called its commercial side, it must in course of time by enlarging our knowledge of the world, suggest to our minds new means and appliances for augmenting our material resources and stimulating our industrial activity. So then, if civilization is another name for the net result of mental, moral, political, and industrial activities, the question of foreign travel is intimately connected with the greater question of our political progress. In the following pages an attempt will be made to discuss the question in the light in which I have put it here—to see how the movement of travelling and sojourning of Indians in foreign countries has arisen, what are its tendencies, immediate and ultimate, good and evil, what is the relative significance of each of its various aspects, in what way it affects our present national revival, and what should be the attitude of an educated Hindu towards it. I purposely say an educated Hindu, for an educated Mahomedan, whatever else may keep him back from sea-voyage, is happily free from the restraints of caste, which is the greatest barrier

against foreign travel in the case of every Hindu, whether of the old school or of the new.

There is a sense in which foreign travel is no new thing to us. Ancient India had commercial intercourse with other countries. The Indians traded with Babylon in the seventh century B. C. In the 10th century B. C. the ivory of Solomon's throne, his precious stones and peacocks and the sandal wood pillars of his temple, have been ascribed by competent authorities to an Indian origin. Early in the 10th century A. D. the products and art-works of India were seen in the court and palaces of the Caliphs of Bagdad. "Four elephants caparisoned in peacock silk stood at the palace gate, and on the back of each were eight men of Sind."<sup>\*</sup> During the Mahomedan period foreign travel assumed a new aspect. The Hindus rarely if ever went beyond Afghanistan and Cashmere ; but the Mahomedan settlers kept up their connection with their homes in Persia, Central Asia, and Arabia. In these times general insecurity was the order of the day and facilities of communication were unknown. One province of India was foreign to another, and it was more difficult and risky then to travel from Lucknow to Delhi than it is now for Cook's tourist to go round the Globe. Caste, too, long before the Mahomedans came had tightened its hold upon the Hindu race, and the traditions of the great days of Asoka and Chandragupta had been forgotten. Still among the Mahomedan population there was a large element of those who either belonged to foreign countries or had visited them. But except in certain superficial aspect this slight connection of India with the outer-world does not seem to have produced any appreciable effect upon the life of its people. Indeed this connection became less and less and in course of time entirely ceased. How is it then that the Mahomedans though foreigners themselves and unrestrained by any caste rules did not keep up and encourage

\* Hunter's History of British India.

intercourse with other countries ? But we may go much further back and ask how is it that the Hindus, who too were at one time foreigners in India, did not keep up connection with their home in Central Asia and after a time shut their doors to all foreigners ? For both questions in their broad and important features may be answered together.

In order to understand the early conservation to which the prejudice against foreign intercourse was due, we must for a time put aside some of the axioms of modern times, and try as far as possible, to realise in our imagination the circumstances in which the older societies had to carry on their struggle for existence and the conditions under which success was then possible. Somebody has spoken of a 'pre-economic age' an age when the postulates of political economy were not true and had no existence ; when labour and capital were not transferable, because the occupations were hereditary ; transferable capital was scanty and Government was unstable ; when free-trade and competitions would have been the ruin of the society which adopted them. There was undoubtedly a preliminary age in the life of mankind where not only the principles of modern political economy, but many other principles and axioms had no application—indeed, when the very contrary principles seem to have been good for men. In primitive societies when human nature was being formed, when human groups were loose and unorganized, when the struggle for existence was fierce and tribal feuds were carried on without giving or taking quarters, the first care of nations was to live ; and then the question of national defence was considered at least as important as, by a curious recrudescence of past savagery, it has come to be considered by some of the great world-powers of our day. In a fighting age militancy was necessary and inevitable. For military success organization was the one thing needful. To bind the loose and incoherent atoms of a tribe into a compact and coherent whole, isolation of tribe

from tribe was necessary, the irresistible power of the tribal chief was necessary, inter-tribal hatred was necessary, the supreme duty of revenge was necessary. No tribe could afford to allow its members to form friendly relations with other tribes, to trade with them, or to go among them, for in those days to go to another tribe was to be lost to one's own. It has been said by a hero\* of modern times that "what one nation hates is another nation." In early times international hatred was one of the preservations of natural existence. If a tribe discovered a fertile tract of land, provided itself with some means of existence, invented some implements of war and industry, it was not to its advantage that the neighbouring tribes should know it, for those were not the days of commercial treaties and international alliances, but of force and violence, when the ultimate question between man and man was as Carlyle has said in his own graphic way, "canst thou kill me, or can I kill thee?" and when, therefore, a rich tribe for instance, if it allowed its riches to be known to other tribes, would have at once excited their cupidity and been plundered by them without any ceremony. Isolation and exclusiveness were then a necessity, intercourse with foreigners would have brought on national ruin.

In India this stage -this "preliminary period" had passed long ago, when, after a long interval during which it developed a noble civilization the light of which not only blazes in what has been called the "Vedic Arcadia," but sends its reflection even to us across the long night of centuries and through the glare of gas and electricity, a relapse took place; civilization became stationary, and after a time took a retrogressive and downward course. It was then that a period came which in its marked features resembled the Mahomedan period, and indeed immediately preceded it. The militant type of society revived; the larger Hindu states were split up into smaller kingdoms and principalities,

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\* Napoleon

feudal institutions came into existence, and tribal jealousies and sectarian hatred became the order of the day. A selfish priesthood imposed its yoke upon the neck of the people; custom fixed and stereotyped the course of national life; caste system elaborated its net in the meshes of which were caught all the elements of progress and advancement. And the worst of it was that it took place at a time when the necessity for isolation, for religious and political autocracy and for the fixed and hereditary divisions was losing its importance, and when other nations were entering upon their career of progress. When from this stationary stage they were passing into that in which those ideas and institutions began feebly and faintly to manifest themselves which have through a long course of centuries fashioned and perfected what is now called modern civilization, the Hindus locked themselves up within the four corners of India, cut off all foreign intercourse by interdicting foreign travel, and instead of profiting by what men were doing in other parts of the globe, began to forget, and finally did forget, what they themselves had done in other days. It was at this time that knowledge became the monopoly of a special class, that the political life was sapped by the extending sway of ecclesiastical pretensions, and that the seeds of racial and sectarian animosities were sown, which corroded the society from within and brought down upon it foreign invasions from without. These were the dark ages of Indian history; and though for a time the meteoric light of Mahomedan civilization shone through them, yet the religious fervour and the conquering zeal which in its earlier days carried the banner and the culture of Islam into so many lands proved in the end inconstant and evanescent, and the spirit of reaction and retrogression marked the Mahomedan Regime as it had marked the Hindu Regime. It is to this long unhappy passage of our national life that the words of Dr. Arnold fitly apply. Well, indeed, might the policy of the old priest-nobles of Egypt and India endeavour to divert their people from



becoming familiar with the sea, and represent the occupation of a seaman as incompatible with the purity of the highest castes. The sea deserved to be hated by the old aristocracies, inasmuch as it has been the mightiest instrument in the civilization of mankind.

So, then, although there is evidence to show that there was commercial intercourse between India and other countries during the last two thousand years, yet it could not have been much ; and the testimony of history is on this point verified by our knowledge of the state of Indian society as it then was. The love of travelling—of moving about from land to land, among strange people and novel scenes inborn of the spirit of adventure, which itself has for its principal ingredients, intellectual curiosity and political enterprise was conspicuously absent. In Europe, the Revival of learning in the fifteenth century, gave a most powerful impulse to intellectual curiosity ; the discovery of America raised to a white heat the spirit of political enterprise ; and the combined effect of both these great events of modern history, may be seen in the commercial activity and the passion for travelling and discovering new lands, which sprang up. In India there was no intellectual curiosity and no political enterprise. Despotism in politics had crushed the political spirit of the people ; despotism in religion had enslaved their intellect. Simple wants, easily satisfied, had become sanctified by an ascetic system of morality, and caste by tying down everybody to his hereditary Status had paralysed the energy of undivided effort and destroyed the feeling of the dignity of manhood. Foreign intercourse was not encouraged by the state which was unstable and despotic, nor by the society which was priest-ridden and conservative. The passion for travelling was absent because neither intellectual unrest nor political ambition was there to feed its flames.

With the advent of the English in India a new epoch began. Since the movement of foreign travel is to my mind

a necessary and inevitable consequence of changes wrought by English or European influences in our life and thought, it will not be out of place to summarise these here. And in order to understand the new Regime we must have a clear idea as to what the old Regime was. In politics the principles of heredity and divine right were dominant. The people had no voice or choice in Government, and the ruler was the absolute master of their fate. In religion the priest was the keeper of the national conscience; empty forms and practices had dimmed if not destroyed the purity of the ancient faith, and false and forged traditions formed the staple of popular beliefs. Religious dissent or doubt was a sin of the deepest dye, and the business of 'fire-insurance' by making the sinners pay in silver and gold in order to escape hell was as brisk as in the worst days of the Catholic Church. In morality the ascetic principle reigned supreme; but human nature avenged itself now and then by revealing in the character of the priests and moral preceptors the worst types of humanity. Caste and custom were the regulators of social matters. Domestic life was governed by the patriarchal authority; women and children had no status but were treated by the patriarch like his goods and chattels. Men were not wanting in fine traits of personal character in the virtues of tenderness, affection, sympathy, generosity, and truthfulness but the patriotic sentiment was unknown, because the national sentiment did not exist; men felt allegiance to their caste or sect or tribe or class; but the larger and wider feeling of nationality embracing the whole country they did not possess. The forces of law and order were weak; the insecurity of life and property had nearly killed the motive for the production and accumulation of wealth, and given ascendancy to military pursuits and occupation over every thing else; and consequently industrial activity was at a low ebb, and all impulse for the cultivation of knowledge and arts was from the national mind withdrawn. This is a sufficiently dark picture of the India of the pre-English

era; but it had many redeeming features also which I have omitted to mention here because they are not quite relevant to my argument

Turn we now to the new Regime. The greatest change has been the change of Government; for the new Government popular in principle, half—despotic in practice, carried on by a free people in a country where freedom has been unknown—embodies all those forces of modern civilization which are, in a thousand ways, moulding, modifying, transforming our national life. This intellectual awakening of India began long before Lord Bentinck, but since his day it has been going on with unprecedented vigour and rapidity. In the beginning of this century the influence of European knowledge and arts had begun to make itself felt among the cultured classes in some parts of India, more particularly in Bengal, where the beginnings of the great reform movement the Brahmo Samaj were laid by the immortal Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the first Indian who crossed the sea and visited England. He was powerfully influenced by the new civilization which Englishmen had brought, and his example influenced many active and powerful minds among his own countrymen. The Indian Renaissance thus begun, was greatly aided and stimulated by the educational and political measures of Metcalf and Bentinck; the introduction of higher education in public schools and colleges, the recognition of the principle of freedom in speech and in the press and in religion created in the literary classes a passion for learning and study, such as, since the revival of letters, has hardly ever been equalled and perhaps never surpassed. "I go to awake the dead" said a scholar of the fifteenth century and it was in this spirit that men turned to the study of English literature, science and arts; but as in Europe men were more fascinated by the literary beauties and graces of the ancient masters than by their science and philosophy; so in this country while scientific culture did not at first seem to have

much attraction for scholars, literary education came to be prosecuted with remarkable ardour and enthusiasm. The institution of public education destroyed the monopoly of knowledge by any privileged caste or class, and diffused the taste and the desire for mental culture through every grade of society. In the intellectual ferment which followed, the old order began to give way beneath the dissolving agencies of thought and change. The Indian intellect after a long time of captivity was emancipated and brought back to the warm precincts of the cheerful day, and began to assert itself in all those spheres from which it had been kept out by rulers and priests. Intellectual curiosity was born, and so also was the spirit of political ambition born. For English literature and English history gave the Indians new conceptions of citizenship and new ideals of life. They felt for the first time free to follow any occupation they chose, and capable of rising to any position by dint of merit. Those who loved English literature became naturally eager to know the home of English literature. Those whose minds were fascinated by European arts and inventions and to whom European civilization had opened a new world of interest and delight could not long resist the seductive influence of European ideas, tastes, habits, and modes of life.

The spell of the past was broken. New vistas of progress were opened. Ardent minds were stirred to their very depth, and then stood clear on high before their bewildered gaze the vision of a new and brighter era yet to come. Of this re-awakened India we may fitly speak in the words of Shelley:—

“The world’s great age begins anew  
The golden years return;  
The earth doth like a snake renew  
Her winter weeds outworn,  
Heaven smiles; and faiths and Empires gleam  
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream”.

It was this revolt of the Indian intellect against the old, this passionate longing for the new which was at once the symbol and the precursor of those changes which led to the readjustment of our ideas and institutions to the needs of modern life, and as a necessary consequence called into being those agencies which have tended to serve this end. One of those agencies was the movement of foreign travel. It was inevitable, and it came. It was, as it has been already remarked, Rajah Ram Mohan Roy who by an inspiration of genius anticipated the hopes and ideals of a later age; the small grain of mustard seed sown by him has in the course of half century grown into a mighty tree. Its importance cannot be properly appreciated unless we realise the new circumstances in which we are placed.

The influence of Western culture is now in the ascendant, and the English are its apostles in this country. It is obvious that our progress and prosperity in the sense in which they are understood now, depend to a considerable extent upon our acquiring those arts and sciences, and assimilating that spirit of action and enterprise, by which the English themselves have risen. There is no other road to national welfare except perhaps that pointed out by Theosophy and esoteric Buddhism, which however the nation does not for the present seem disposed to adopt. In these days knowledge is power; and under English dominion the rule of the sword has been partially superseded by that of opinion. And here comes in our difficulty. In the past we could wield the sword quite as well as the ruling class, who possessed no marked intellectual superiority over us and from whom we were not divided by any wide gulf of social differences. Those days are passed. Every thing has become complicated requiring intense mental strain. "We were in simple addition, we are in the differential calculus." Now we are governed by a people who are decidedly superior to us both in the arts of war and peace, who, if they

cannot beat us hollow in pure speculation, in religion and morality, do yet possess an amount of verified knowledge, a mass of facts, tested, assorted, kept ready for particular use, and an armoury of mechanical inventions which are simply astounding and bewildering to the Asiatic mind, and which give their possessor an undisputed superiority over us in all the practical concerns of life. These superior people govern us, and their Government is a sort of constitutional Government in which knowledge and intelligence play an important part. In its counsels opinion counts for much, but it must be not only an informed and enlightened opinion, but it must be so expressed, that our rulers may also admit it to be informed and enlightened. For superior people are apt to despise their inferiors, and care little for their opinion, and this is true of the English in their attitude towards our public opinion—unless those opinions are so unmistakably sound and clear that no honest mind can refuse to consider them. And thus while a premium is placed upon knowledge and intelligence, we are forced to compete in the intellectual sphere, if we want to improve our political status, with an intellectually superior race.

We must, if we are eager for place and power in the administration of our country, acquire that culture which alone is now a passport to honor and fame. In raising ourselves to the intellectual level of the rulers we shall be simultaneously raising ourselves to their political level. Political equality will come when intellectual equality has come.

But apart from the general political efforts which we anticipate from the diffusion of Western culture in India as a matter of mere bread-and-butter, its necessity is plain and imperative. Before everything else we must live. Life before liberty—for circumstanced as we are, it would be of no little advantage to the country if we occasionally showed a little more eagerness in possessing ourselves of the flesh-pots of worldly comforts and worshipping the golden calf than in

singing psalms to Representative Government. When I see the utter neglect with which the awful problem of subsistence is treated in this country, and the little or no regard that is paid to industries and the production of wealth and the necessaries of life, I am almost persuaded to think that it would be an advantage to the country if Indians were to forget for sometime their higher ideals, and if they betook themselves to meaner and lovelier occupation raking in the straw and dust like the old man in the *Pilgrim's Progress* unmindful of the angel who offers him a crown of gold and precious stones. For what is the predicament in which we stand ?

In the learned professions, the competition is keen as keen can be. There is a rush of candidates for every office. "Every gate is thronged with suitors, all the markets overflow." For the higher branches of the public service, for Medicine, Law, Engineering, Agriculture, we must go to England. And our young men must compete there with the flower of English youth. Is this not enough to open our eyes ? Have Indians ever had to carry on the struggle for existence against such tremendous odds ? Failure in this competition means extinction. And yet the public service and the learned professions are after all of small significance in adding to the material resources of the country. Now national prosperity depends upon the development of trade and industries. But we have no trade and hardly any industries worth the name. Our old indigenous industries have decayed and are decaying ; they were bound to decay, for how can primitive implements and contrivances stand before modern inventions. Muscles and sinews are no match for the iron hands of steam giants. In past times over-population redressed its balance by letting out floods of barbarian invasions. In these days it seeks an outlet in colonisation, in stealing into foreign countries in the guise of trade, protected by what is called sphere of influence, and

filling its stomach at the expense of weaker races by means of the policy of the open door. In European countries the competition in trade has grown very keen, and the pressure of over-population is beginning to be felt. Consequently the process of colonisation is going on with increasing rapidity, while the mental energies of the nations are becoming more and more absorbed in the improvement of technical and industrial training, and in the invention of mechanical tools and appliances. With such a Europe looking with hungry eyes upon the possessions of other people, ready to venture forth in search of fresh fields and pastures new to feed its surplus population, India stands face to face. How to meet this Europe, how to keep its food from being eaten up by foreigners, how to protect its industries from the snares and allurements of Free Trade ; how to feed its own surplus population for whom outside India the British Empire has nothing but degradation and servitude—this is the great problem—the awful sphinx riddle—with which India is confronted, and which not to answer is to be destroyed. Anyhow if the severity of the industrial struggle is manifest, it goes without saying that in order to engage in it with any chance of success we must fight with the improved weapons of our adversaries. Technical and mechanical training is, therefore, the one thing needful.

All this is a plea for higher education and mechanical training, it may be urged. Yes ; but it is much more ; it is a plea for 'foreign travel' also, for if higher education and mechanical training are good things, the necessity for obtaining the best kinds available becomes at once obvious. That there are, compared with India, far more facilities in England and other European countries for receiving the best training, scientific, literary, and technical, which the age can give is a proposition, the truth of which, I presume, will not be seriously disputed. But I wish to explain and amplify it a little in this place, in order to bring



home more vividly to the public mind, the manner in which education is received in England. I confine my remarks to England as the one European country with which we are chiefly concerned, which besides offering the best quality of mental pabulum, produces certain other effects upon the student which are of the greatest moment to him, and the absence of which in our educational institutions is responsible in no small measure for the just and unjust charges that are often made against English education.

I take scientific teaching and technical and industrial instruction first. Now in India there is hardly any well-organized system of training in mechanical and industrial arts. Mr. Tata's scheme may, I am sure it will, in course of time, be of great service to us in the matter ; but at present the industrial training of Indian youths is only a far—off adorable dream of the future. In England this difficulty does not exist. The workshops and other institutions for the theoretical and practical instruction in mechanical arts are there ; and although they do not quite freely admit Indians, still with the assistance of their English friends they can obtain admission. This is one reason why England is one of the best places for the industrial training of Indians ; but there is another reason even stronger than this. To live for a time in an atmosphere of industrialism, to see it in full operation, to mark the stamp of business on the sea of faces as it surges through the streets of London, Manchester and Birmingham from dawn till dusk, to witness the marvels of mechanical inventions and the clash and din of competing, conflicting forces in large centres of industry, this in itself is to my mind a matter of great advantage to an Indian. He knows his society ; he must know what the European society is like. He must feel its fascination, he must catch its contagion, he must enter into the spirit and understand the tempers of money-making people ; and by contrast learn to realise more vividly than he can other-

wise how dull his own society is, how inactive and dormant, stirred by no ambition, moved by no strong desires, unaffected by the greed of gold, but equally destitute of the good things which gold can buy. No receptive mind can fail to catch the tone of English society which is pre-eminently industrial.

These remarks are applicable not to students only; they have a wider application; they apply to Indians actually carrying on trade with foreign countries. These stand in greater need of, and are likely to profit more by keeping themselves in constant touch with European life by studying its commercial secrets, by acquiring something of its feverish restlessness, its pushing and practical temperament. The Parsis who took the lead in this matter are now at the head of our trading classes. Even the Mohamedans of the Deccan, though less educated and naturally less practical than the Parsis, have improved their position considerably by establishing commercial relations with Africa and Arabia in the West, and China and the Malay Peninsula in the East. The Hindus are behind both the Parsis and the Mohammedans, although they, too, are beginning to realise the exigencies of modern life and the important part which trade plays in it. These traders by doing business with foreign countries bring to India not only silver and gold, not only articles of material comfort and luxury; they bring something more, they bring fresh experience of countries new and strange, a spirit of adventure and enterprise, wider sympathies and a more accurate knowledge of the life of varied mankind. India needs them, for while those are among the fruits of trade and travel, they in their turn react upon and stimulate the movement of trade and travel by weakening those prejudices and levelling down those barriers which have hitherto kept India isolated from other countries, and by strengthening those tendencies and creating those desires and ambitions which are calculated to draw it in course of time into the current of general commercial activity.

Important as is this aspect of the question under consideration, I am however for the present more concerned with the mental, moral and political effects of the movement of foreign travel and therefore shall for a while try to ascertain in what relation it stand to what is called the higher or liberal education of Indian youths.

A little further back we started with two propositions,—first, that India needs liberal education of the modern type, and second, that this education can best be obtained in England. The first proposition is not disputed, but the second sometimes is. The objection comes somewhat in the following form; If an intelligent youth desires to cultivate his mind, there is sufficient scope for him in our Universities. He can study English literature, sciences, philosophy arts. He has able teachers to teach him any thing he wants to learn. The great books in literature, philosophy and science are as easily accessible to him as they are to the English youth at home. Keshab Chander Sen, Kristo Das Pal, Rajendra Lal Mitter, K. T. Telang, Mr. Justice Ranade, Sir T. Madhava Rao were not educated in England; but where will you find their equals among England-returned men as writers, orators, scholars, statesmen and masters of the English tongue? A man of capacity will make his mark anywhere and everywhere; a dull man will remain dull whether he lives in the enervating climate of Bengal, or the bracing atmosphere of England. As for moral training, so far as schools and colleges can impart it, there can hardly be any difference between a college at Cambridge and a college at Calcutta; while in England—this is a positive disadvantage—the Indian youth is freed from the moral restraints of home and society.

There is some truth in this view of the matter, but not the whole truth. It is true that the generality of England-returned students are not very superior to those who have been educated in India, either in culture or in conduct. It

is equally true that Indian Universities have produced men of great mental and moral eminence. We may accept these facts, and still be able to hold that education received in England must, if not now or in the immediate future, certainly in the long run, produce results on a far grander scale than any that can be expected from our Indian educational system. If England-returned youths do not in many cases come up to the expectations formed of them, there are definite intelligible reasons for it to which I will advert later on ; here I would submit a few general considerations which would at once disclose some serious defects in our educational system, and leave little doubt as to the necessity for securing to our youths a sound liberal education at an English University.

To an Indian youth of average intelligence the change from a society intellectually dull and inert to a society brimful of ideas, and seething with intellectual unrest cannot but affect in a variety of ways, as he is bound to catch something of the fever and restlessness pervading the new atmosphere. He must learn to have his wits about him when everybody else whom he meets has his wits about him. He may not read many books, but he cannot help learning something of the wisdom without them and above them, which is won by observation. Daily and hourly he is brought into contact with men who are his intellectual superiors. He finds that the home he lives in is not like the home he has left behind, his companions at the fire-side and the dinner-table are not uninformed or half--informed men and ignorant women, but men and women of culture, of taste, of information. The new environments must tell upon his mental constitution, and modify it unconsciously and in spite of himself ; his ways will begin to change quite as naturally as a man's accent changes by living among a new people ; he will begin to find some relish in intellectual exercises as one begins to like English cheese and Irish stem. The friction of strange

thoughts may irritate him, but will humble his pride, and when he comes back to India he will not be very tolerant of the self-complacency of his countrymen. We must assume some such result from his sojourn in England, or else there is no way of accounting for the operation of social forces upon the minds and character of men.

But we may take two concrete instances as to how an Indian student would be affected by his new surroundings. First the moral influence of teachers. Cardinal Newman in his celebrated sermon on 'Personal Influence, the Means of Propagating the Truth' has described how men are influenced more by the example of the teacher, the type of what is deserving of their love and respect presented to their eyes in a concrete and tangible form, than by books or preachings. It is this personal influence of the teacher which our educational institutions lack, but which pervades every English College, and is the most important factor in the making of English youths. And in India, we cannot, I am afraid, have it for a long time. Able and efficient teachers, though a rare commodity up to the present, can yet be had if we pay for them; but teachers capable of exercising any spell of personal influence upon their pupils, by sympathising with their hopes and tendencies, by winning their confidence and reading the secrets of their hearts, teachers who live for their pupils so that their pupils may learn to live for others—who weep over their sorrows and are happy in their joys—such teachers, indispensable factors in the education of a nation's youth, are and must be rare in this country. And the reason is plain. Indian teachers, even when they are trained in their profession, are after all a wheel in the educational machine, which itself is part of the bigger administrative machine of the country, and those forces which in other departments of the State keep down the independence and originality of Indian public servants tell upon the teacher also. He must carry out the rigid regulations of the depart-

ment ; he cannot encourage or in any way countenance in his pupil's any disposition or tendency which is not to the taste of his superior officer ; his eye is on promotion by results. It will be demanding too much from human nature to expect them to live as a sort of organised protest against the European society which surrounds them. For they must, if they wish to exercise a teacher's influence over their pupils, regulate their lives very differently to that of the generality of their countrymen. They must identify themselves with the pupils. They must show forbearance, meekness, sympathy, affection in their treatment of them ; they must mix freely with them let them feel by their little acts of kindness and of love that whatever the Anglo-Indian civil, or merchant or soldier may think of Indians, they at any rate have a genuine regard for their welfare, and that under their roof no race or class differences shall be allowed to mar the harmony of an open friendly social intercourse. But political feeling is so strong in this country and the exclusiveness of the English community so rigid, that the most amiable of English teachers after a time succumb to class influences, their temperaments change, their affableness passes off, 'the dyer's hand is subdued to what it works in,' and so the result is not that he is lost ; the result is that the whole host of his pupils is lost. Now those who do not sufficiently realise the importance of educating young men in England should see how great this loss is, and yet it is just from this loss that the Indian youth is saved who is fortunate enough to be brought up in an English college under the personal influence of his teachers and professors. It was said of a teacher that he had breathed the love of knowledge and truth into a whole generation of his countrymen. This high function a good teacher does really discharge, and in the English seats of learning there are many such. The Indian youth particularly needs a tonic of a good personal example of his teacher, because his home can offer him none, nor his society ; nor would his

life without such influence be a very desirable one in a country where so many temptations beset a young man's course, and where amid the whirl of passions and frivolities, his soft moral constitution is liable to be shaken and shattered.

Were the advantage of placing Indian youths in English colleges, in this alone the experiment would be well worth trying. But the English University life is beneficial to them in many other respects. First, it places them under a strict moral discipline which is entirely wanting in this country. There the student after his college hours does not feel free to do what he pleases. He has to conform to certain rules, he has to behave himself in a certain manner; the supervision of the teacher does not cease beyond the college compound, and under the subtle moral influence of the corporate life of the University of which he forms a part, a certain sense of responsibility arises in the student of seeing that no stain is cast by any act of his upon the honor of his institution. Secondly, he is enabled to associate on terms of intimacy with the flower of English youth. This influences his mind and character in a variety of ways. Some of its effects are well described by Mr. Bagehot. Referring to the advantage of the collegiate system at Oxford and Cambridge, he remarks thus:

"There is nothing for young men like being thrown into close neighbourhood with young men; it is the age of friendship; and every encouragement should be given, every opportunity enlarged for it; school friendships are childish, after-life rarely brings many; it is in youth alone that we can engrave deep and wise friendships on our close and stubborn texture. If there be romance in them, it is a romance which few would tear aside. All that 'pastors and masters' can teach young people is as nothing when compared with what young people can't help teaching one another. Man made the school, God made the playground. Horses and marbles,

the knot of boys beside the schoolboy fire, the hard blows given, and the harder ones received these educate mankind. So too in youth, the real plastic energy is not in tutors or lectures or in books 'got up' but in Wordsworth and Shelley; in the books that all read because all like—in what all talk of because all are interested in—in the argumentative walk or disputatious lounge—in the impact of young thought upon young thought, of fresh thought on fresh thought, of hot thought on hot thought—in mirth and refutation—in ridicule and laughter—for these are the free play of the natural mind and these cannot be got without a college." For an Indian youth this is a great advantage, this impact of 'hot thought on hot thought' as this is an element wholly wanting both in our colleges and our society.

But this is not all. The being brought together in close and intimate association of Indian and English youths for a certain length of time, is a fact of every great significance. Both come to understand each other, like each other, overlook each other's faults, recognise each other's merits. The Indian youth, as yet his mind unembittered by any experience of Anglo-Indian roughness and harshness, sees nothing but gentleness, politeness, and generous manliness in the English youth. The English youth, as yet without any pride of domination, and knowing only that a gentleman is a gentleman whether white or black, finds many good points in his Indian fellow-student, a tender and sympathetic nature, a calm and sober temperament, a loving and grateful heart. Prejudices of race and colour are rubbed off on the cricket field and in the lecture-room, and friendships are formed which are not only a source of joy and comfort to the parties concerned, but which tend indirectly and imperceptibly, to forge new bonds of sympathy and good will between India and England. Those Englishmen with whom we have associated as fellow-students, with whom we have rowed on the Cam and the Isis, with whom



we have passed some golden hours of youthful mirth and enjoyment—those Englishmen wherever they may go, whatever station in life they may be placed in, can never fail to cherish kindly feelings towards us and ours, and remove many a misunderstanding from the minds of their own countrymen. And for us too is needed an open and free social intercourse with Englishmen in order to make us forget racial degradation and political inferiority, lose that unmanly nervousness which the best of us feel in the presence of Englishmen, and those feelings of suspicion and estrangement with which we regard them. My belief is that few Indians who have not seen the English University life are able to understand and appreciate English character as it really is, and to maintain their self-respect without going to the extreme of self-assertiveness, in the presence of an Englishman. Personal contact removes the superstitious awe of centuries, and introduces into our relations with the ruling race an element of fraternal sentiment which is bound to soften and sweeten the course of our political life.

Now, who can deny that these are great benefits worth great sacrifices? Education of a superior order, special training for the learned professions, and the public service, a large experience of modern life with all its multifarious activities, the formation of character under the varied influences of English social life, numerous opportunities and facilities for understanding Englishmen and cultivating friendship with them, the renovation and re-invigoration of our minds and characters by breathing an air thick with ideas and by living among an active, energetic, restless race of men, these are the benefits which Indian youths are expected to derive from their sojourn in England—benefits which are real and enduring in their effects upon the course of our future progress. The question is, do they derive them? Even those who are in favour of foreign travel and of sending youngmen to England hesitate to give an unqualified answer.

They say 'Yes, going to England for education and improvement is a good thing; but our young men don't do anything there; they spend lots of money, become anglicised in their manners and habits, come back as very indifferent lawyers, begin to dispise their countrymen and do nothing for their society. So far the experiment has been a faliure. Let every parent think thrice before he sends out his son to England.'

There is, I am willing to admit, some justification for this punitive judgment; still it may be reasonably urged that the experiment has not had a fair trial, and even then it has not failed. The dissatisfaction with the actual result is due to our own over-sanguine expectations. Consider for a moment the circumstances under which Indian youths ordinarily go to England. In most cases they are the sons of uneducated or half-educated parents. They go to England equipped with a very indifferent education; their parents cannot regulate their training nor determine for them the choice of their profession. So these young men are expected to do the impossible. Without sufficient University education, they are expected to undertake successfully the task of self-education. Without experience and guidance they are expected to choose a profession. And further they are expected to perform these remarkable feats with plenty of money in their pockets, with numerous temptations surrounding them from all sides, free to form any friendship and choose any companions, removed from the moral influences of their own home and society, and thrown suddenly upon the wide, wide sea of modern life without any rudder or compass to steer their course. And what is the result? The result is that their frail barks are wrecked, the waves wash them down—the wished—for haven is never reached. The showy and exciting side of European life proves more attractive; the young man, sure of large remittances from home does not care to go to Oxford or Cam-

bridge, for he has no thirst for knowledge and there is none to create that in him ; he stays in London, joins one of the Inns of Court, goes to some Coach who by convenient short cuts leads him to the great success at the examination, and thus when at the cost of a few weeks' mechanical labour he becomes a full-fledged barrister, thinks that he has gained the be-all and the end-all of his existence, and returns to India as the joy and pride of his people. What is there for him to do otherwise ? Fancy an English boy of fifteen or sixteen sent to Paris receiving large allowances from his parents, left free to do what he likes with his money and himself, without any friends to assist and advise him in regard to his education. What would be his fate ? His young instincts and impulses will get the better of him, the glitter of a gay society will soon begin to create in him unwholesome cravings, and the weaknesses of human nature will make him what uncorrected by salutary influences, they are always apt to make of ordinary men. Why should we, in the first instance, fondly imagine that sea-voyage and foreign travel in the case of the Indian youth are good, irrespective of any conditions that by the mere act of crossing the sea he

‘Suffers a sea-change

Into something rich and strange,’\*

and when in the end he fails to fulfil our expectations, then turn to blaming him and the civilization which is supposed to have corrupted him ? This is not reasonable. He is a creature of the circumstances in which his parents deliberately placed him ; and they need not feel much disappointed if they find that thorns and thistles have not yielded them figs and grapes.

Still I cannot help remarking here that the experiment in spite of so many disadvantages and drawbacks has not wholly failed. Wise and educated parents have been able to turn the experiment to good account. They

have watched their sons' education here and secured efficient supervision of it in England. They have taken care that their sons received good education, lived in good society, made good friendships and chose such professions as were suited to their tastes and bent of mind. These young men have come out as Civilians, Doctors, Engineers, Agriculturists, Scientific Specialists. In their various walks of life they have earned distinction and fame, and given us men like Syed Mahomed, Romesh Chunder Dutt, Surendra Nath Banerjee, W. C. Bonnerjee, the late Dr. Bahadurji and the brilliant Wrangler Pranjapye. Even in the ranks of such young men as have not the advantage of wise parental advice and guidance in the matter of their education, and are thrown upon their own resources there appear from time to time men who rise victorious over the temptations of their situations, in whom the in-born faculty for acquiring knowledge seeks its own satisfaction without any external or adventitious aids, who by dint of natural gifts assimilate the best part of European culture, and in whose life a few years' sojourn in England proves an epoch-making event. It speaks volumes for the vitality of modern culture and of the desire which the Indian mind has come to cherish for it, that in spite of the perils and pitfalls of European life, in spite of all the circumstances which are adverse to the acquisition of knowledge and the formation of character, in spite of money in young hands, wine in young heads and the first flutter of new passions in young hearts, the experiment has not altogether failed—that scores of Indian youths go every year to England and some of them do well. It is a great thing that not only many are called, but a few are actually chosen. As things now stand, much money is doubtless wasted; fond parents thoughtlessly send their sons to England without any clear notions as to what they should do there, many young men turn out utterly worthless and

break their parents' hearts. But to a certain extent this is inevitable. This is the process of Nature as she works upwards to higher stages of perfection; "of fifty seeds she often brings but one to bear." How many noble lives are wrecked, how many hopes are blasted, how much misery is caused, what an enormous quantity of human energy and effort is wasted before humanity as by some happy accident brings forth some great character—who makes amends for the wasteful process of nature, who stamps the image of his personality upon his age and moulds the creed of millions. The movement of sending young men to England is to my mind a good worth having, even at the heavy price we have to pay for it in the utter wreck of scores of our youths, if even once in a decade it sifts one individual of exceptional ability and moral worth from the whole mass, for this one individual strikes fire in a million hearts and clears away prejudices which clog the progress of his race. I feel pained but not discouraged by the sorrows and misfortunes of the present, for I believe that even our blind and wasteful efforts are preparing the way for a happier future.

Still the question whether the painful and wasteful process by which we now endeavour to assimilate western culture will be long or short, is one of no small moment to any one who is interested in the education of Indian youth and their future well-being. We cannot, as rational men, wait upon the chapter of accidents, and cast the burden of our responsibility upon the shoulders of Providence. In sending our sons to England, there are certain matters which demand our earnest consideration. In the first place every Indian parent must see if he has got sufficient means to educate his son properly in England. If he has not, then I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that he should never think of the matter, whatever may be the case with English boys; a foreigner must be prepared to spend a good deal if

he wants to profit by his sojourn in England. In the second place, the time of the boys' education should be determined here, if the father himself is competent to do it; if not, he must have it determined by some competent men in England. At all events the boy should be left little freedom to choose his own education, for in nine cases out of ten he will make a wrong choice. In this country we have a very good illustration of it in the fact that when left to themselves, and in most cases they are left to themselves, our young men prefer literary to scientific course for their degree examinations. When this is the case with comparatively advanced students, what can we expect from boys going to England who hardly matriculate before leaving the country? Thirdly, it is a question of very great importance as to the age at which the Indian student should be sent to England. He may be sent either when he is very young, or when he is passing out his boyhood and is in the middle of his education, or when he is a grown-up young man and has completed his college career. Each stage has its advantages and its drawbacks. The most impressionable age is certainly childhood. Whoever is educated in England from that age will undoubtedly come back to India with English sentiments and habits, but decidedly denationalised and anglicised. Perhaps to some this may seem desirable, it does not so to me. My idea is that one who has never known his father and mother, who has never learnt to love his brothers and sisters, whose earliest associations are connected with foreign scenes and incidents, who sees the civilization of his own country after his whole mental and moral nature has been transformed by the civilization of another—such a one whatever may be his merits in certain respects, will not care much for his people and country, will not understand their simple, superstitious idyllic life, will be disqualified by his formed mind and stiffened creed, for the great work which requires to be done during the present transitional epoch—the work in the conflict of old and new forces of fusion, preparation, adaptation, tentative

endeavour. If a boy of fifteen or sixteen goes to England, the great advantage is that he has sufficient time before him to prosecute his studies, his mind is plastic enough to receive new and fresh impressions, and yet at the same time capable of retaining the traces of home-influences, there is not much danger of his becoming denationalised. But this is just the age then the dawning youth leads the mind into many wild ways, when character begins to be formed, when it makes all the difference in the world whether the young man keeps a little to the right or a little to the left in order to arrive at the right goal. If the student goes to England after completing his college career here, he certainly goes well equipped with enough culture to be able to take full advantage of English life and training to choose his own line of education, to enrich his experience by an intelligent observation of European society. But, on the other hand, we must remember that mind like ourselves stiffens with age, a young man of over twenty does not possess the same plastic and flexible intellect as a lad of sixteen; he goes to England with the hold of early association strong upon him, with formed habits and rooted convictions; he may learn much, but he can really unlearn little; and although his mind is stored with a fund of new ideas, yet I doubt if he is able to add a cubit to his moral stature. It is not to be understood that his character does not in some material respects change for the better under the influence of his new surroundings; it does change and improve, but in its broad lineaments it remains what his home and society have made it, he gives intellectual assent to many principles to which his moral nature has not quite adapted itself.

Now while briefly pointing out some of the chief advantages and drawbacks of the ages at which the youth may be, and as a matter of fact, are sent to England, it is not necessary for me to say which I consider to be the best age, for this must be decided with reference to the particular circumstances of

each student - his antecedents, his surroundings, his education, his natural endowments, and the walk of life for which his parents and instructors think him most fitted. Suffice it to say that each age requires special provisions and safeguards, and the younger the age of the student the greater the need for them. As, of course, the majority of England-visiting students are, and will always be young men between sixteen and twenty years of age, with incomplete college training, some of the considerations pointed out above seem to me important, to which one or two more may fitly be added in this place.

It is of the utmost importance that these young men should be placed with English families and their education looked after by English friends. As far as possible they should not be exposed to the risk and inconveniences of lodging-houses and boarding-houses. It is not easy to find good families who would take Indian boarders, but the personal influence of English friends will go far to obviate this difficulty.

The most difficult thing is the supervision of young Indians' education. Some thirteen or fourteen years ago a Committee was formed in London under the auspices of the National Indian Association for the purpose of looking after Indian students and giving them help and advice in matters of education. The committee, I believe, still exists. One of the cardinal principles of this Committee has been that it must have the young men's money in its own hands, and regulate and check their expenses, for here or elsewhere the master of the purse is the master of everything. If the student has control of his money, no supervision can avail. He will spend money as he likes and will seldom like what he should. Even during the early days of its existence when I was a member of that committee, I could find it capable of doing much good, and one of the tests of its good work was that the very first batch of young men who were placed under



its charge and were in every way doing well under its supervision, rid themselves of its restraining influences as soon as they could persuade their parents to make them the sole disposers of their money. Indian parents have not sufficiently availed themselves of the help offered by this Committee, but I have no doubt that the utility of the Committee or similar organisations will be felt more and more as the career of England-returned young men produces a larger and larger harvest of disappointments.\*

Another very important thing is the choice of a profession. We often hear pathetic wails over the legal profession being overstocked; so it is; but beyond weeping and wailing what do we do? On the contrary we send our sons to England and feel very happy when they join the Inns of Court. They manage to pass the necessary examinations and return to India as "gentlemen of the long robe," but with very short arms to wrestle with the difficulties of their profession. Now, I do not say that young men should not study Law in England--some of them are eminently fitted for that branch of knowledge; but they must turn their attention to other professions also. There is great room for good doctors, engineers and other scientific specialists in this country; and surely these are more needed for the production and augmentation of our national wealth than any number of lawyers put together. But we must not expect a boy of sixteen or seventeen to be able to resist the temptation of swimming with the current, and of doing what he sees his other fellow-students do.

While these are some of [the principal things which parents and guardians would do well to take into their consideration, there are some others, equally important but equally neglected by those whom they concern, upon which it may not be inopportune to address a few words to the

\* This is certainly an interesting forecast, witness Lord Lytton's committee now sitting in London. *Editor.*

young men themselves. They have to bear in mind that the question of foreign travel, besides its educational aspect has other aspects as well, and in regard to these they bear certain peculiar responsibilities because their sojourn in England, their education and their new experience give them a peculiar position in their society. In the concluding pages of this essay I can but very briefly touch upon this side of the question.

I have spoken of foreign travel. More particularly in one of its concrete and most important aspects in connection with the education of Indian youths as part of the great movement of illumination, the rise and spread of which under the flag of new forces is perhaps the most remarkable phenomenon of modern times; and therefore I cannot but think of those who visit Europe either for business or for education, as having a high duty laid upon them of preparing themselves for the great task of social regeneration which awaits them, on their return in this country. The question of social reform has many sides and involves many intricate issues; but one thing with regard to it appears clear beyond the reach of doubt, that for a speedy and successful solution of it, the sympathy and moral support of Englishmen are nearly as needful as the patriotic co-operation and energetic exertions of the Indians themselves. Now it is clear that if the generality of Englishmen are mere indifferent spectators of our social changes, and do not care to cultivate a free and friendly intercourse with us, it is because both of us are separated by certain race prejudices, born of our ignorance of each other's habits and disposition. In India the exigencies of politics will probably keep these prejudices alive for many a day. But in England it is possible to remove them to a considerable extent, if we succeed in making Englishmen see that Indians are not the semi-savages they are so often represented to be, that they have a great civilization of their own, that

in intelligence and morals they are not unworthy specimens of humanity. And we must remember that Englishmen will judge the whole race by such of its specimens as may happen to come before them. At present they see Indian merchants, politicians and students. From their character and accomplishments, their tastes and pursuits they judge the state of our civilization. They are quite justified in supposing that the Indians whom they see in England are mostly of a superior class; and if their superior class do not seem to them to come up to the mark and betray any serious defects and shortcomings, they cannot be expected to think much of the common sense of our countrymen. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the Indians who go to England should, by their intelligence and character, be fitted to make a favourable impression upon the minds of the English people; the credit of a whole nation is in their hands; they may lower it or raise it in the eyes of the civilized world. The vastness of the consequences flowing from their conduct is the measure of their responsibility. Let no Indian think that, if in London or Paris, where nobody seems to care who he is, where he feels himself 'lonely in a crowd,' he misbehaves himself, nothing matters. His landlady and maid servant, the waiter that serves him his dinner at the Club, the barber that shaves him—these watch him, scrutinise him in his careless unguarded moments, and according to the impression they come to form of him, they think of his country and people. If these Englishmen come constantly in contact with good and well-behaved Indians, or refined tastes and gentlemanly habits they cannot but begin to respect the nation to which they belong, and once they come to look upon us as their worthy associates in the work of life, we may be sure of their sympathy and co-operation in the great work of reform which lies before us. Think of the change in European sentiments towards India wrought by men like Professor Max Muller and others by bringing to light certain race affinities between the East and the West;

how much greater would be the benefit to India, and why not to England also, if the Englishman finds that his Indian fellow-subject, besides being related to him by ties of race and language, is possessed of certain mental and moral excellences which are the boast of modern civilization. This view of the matter seems to me important, for the sympathy and good-will of rulers have always been decisive factors in the progress of natives.

While it is important that the Indian who goes to England should make a favourable impression upon the people there, it is equally important that on his return home he should be found deserving of the respect and confidence of his own people, for they will judge European civilization, the advantages of European experience and knowledge from their effect upon his mind and character. His example may be encouraging or disappointing; in either case its bearing upon the people's attitude towards English culture and English civilization is obvious. Every human thing is judged by its fruits. The people at large are very suspicious of new ideas and institutions, have little confidence in new growths, have accepted many new things under the pressure of necessity, and this feeling of distrust of modern aims and ideals of life will continue so long as their goodness and soundness is not proved to them by plain and palpable results. The Indian who returns home anglicised—with English vices and without English virtues, who treats his national institutions with a superior air of contempt, rides roughshod over his people's prejudices, and delights in wounding their tenderest susceptibilities—his example goes far towards strengthening and intensifying those feelings of suspicion and even positive dislike which the Indians generally cherish towards modern civilization. It is a common complaint against many England-returned Indians that they become denationalised and have lost touch with their society. The complaint is, on

the whole just, and I have no doubt that the reaction which has of late set in this country against the indiscriminate adoption of European ideas, fashions and manners which characterised young Indians till fifteen or twenty years ago is partly due to the discouraging example set by anglicised Indians, and partly to that general advancement of knowledge by which the people are beginning to appreciate better than before the worth of their religion and the beauties of their ancient literature. So then, if this reaction against modern civilization, which seems to me in some of its aspects even now premature and injurious, is not to arrest the march of the Indian mind by delaying indefinitely the readjustment of the old order to the exigencies of the new time, it is necessary that England-returnd men should be typical of all that is good in modern life and culture, so that by the actual worthiness of their lives they may be capable of disarming hostile criticism and correcting popular prejudices, of enabling the people to feel some attraction for European ways of thinking and living and inducing them to exchange old lamps for new. This high mission Providence has laid upon their shoulders. Every young Indian who goes to England is charged not only with the duties of a student, but also with those of a reformer. He is an apostle of modern civilization, a bringer of the new light to his countrymen. If his light too turns out to be mere darkness, then how great will be the darkness! He should recognise from the very beginning this part of his duty as of very solemn import, the preparation for the proper performance of which is not to be put off for a single day.

I do not agree with those who think that a young man should think of nothing except his studies so long as he is a student, that the proper time for cherishing dreams of reform is when he enters the world. Youth, to my mind is the time for everything which ought to be the subject

of a good citizen's life. It is the time when the mind is plastic to the touch of circumstances, when confidence in one's self—the great secret of success in every walk of life,—is abundant, when sympathies and affections are ardent, and the fount of energy full and fresh, and if this time is not utilized by filling young and passionate hearts with the fervour of social amelioration, we may rest assured that no efforts and experience of after years will avail much.

Manhood brings its own duties, its own cares and anxieties and then who thinks of social good? Other impulses are developed, other ambitions arise. Men easily succumb to them. The world is so strong that sometimes even those who in their younger days felt social fervour as soon as they find themselves in the rough and tumble of life and experience

“The losses, the crosses

That active man engage,”

cool down half in despair, half in disgust at a world out of joint which will not allow itself to be set right as promptly as they would wish. Hence we find men who are good friends, good fathers, good husbands, respectable citizens and honest public servants, and yet who seem to possess no public spirit, to care nothing for others, whom the sufferings of their fellows beyond the limited circle of their friends and relations do not move, and in whom the sense of social duty is very imperfectly developed. These are the men who in their younger days never learnt to regard social good as the supreme object of their life. Nobody will ever be capable of caring for his society with much ardour in his riper years who does not learn to care for it when young. In this spring tide of life when our faculties are active and alert and the blood runs swiftly in our veins, when the light of love and hope gilds our horizon, and the song of birds is sweet in our ears, and

the sight of flowers gladdens our heart then, then is the time for dreaming dreams and seeing visions of social and political Utopias, for it is these dreams and visions which make the love of humanity the breath of our nostrils, and even in the midst of the world's cruellest disappointments enable us to pursue with undiminished zeal our up-hill struggles towards the light and the right sustained by the 'mighty hopes that make us men'. It is because I have this strong faith in the impulses and enthusiasms of youth that I so much desire that these impulses and enthusiasms of the young men who go to England should be made use of and the supreme importance of, their right use in the cause of social good should be impressed upon their minds.

And it is even of immediate and practical importance that young men should have the sense of social responsibility fully awakened in them, for the very first problem which on their return home, at least such of them as are of Hindu persuasion, have to solve, is how to get themselves reinstated in their respective communities. For him who is prepared to abjure caste publicly the solution is easy; he gives up his small sect and becomes a citizen of the world. But it is extremely doubtful if in any other respect he improves his position. If he has sons and daughters, if he is a man of sociable nature, he is sure to feel certain practical difficulties which every one must feel who has given up his society, and is not able to enter any other. But we need not trouble ourselves about him, because for a long time to come, he may be certain his example will not be popular in this country. Then there is the case of those who want to get back into their society, which they know to be caste-bound, but which they want to enter on condition they are allowed to go about as so many chartered libertines submitting to no caste rules and doing whatever they like in open defiance of them. And this brings in the question of *Praschit* or penance, upon which I intended to say something

but as I have already exceeded my limits, I shall confine myself to a few general remarks upon the remarkable attitude of these men towards their society.

Hindu society, it would be generally admitted, is not as yet prepared to give up caste. It is no use saying that society tolerates breaches of caste, that there are hundreds and thousands who eat and drink with everybody and society takes no notice of them, that when one does what society already knows and connives at, why shouldn't he be allowed to do it openly? Why, for the simple reason that society is not prepared to tolerate open defiance of caste rules. If any one think it is, he has only to ask it to allow him to remain in it on condition of his observing no caste rules, and he will soon find himself out of it. The changes of a hundred years have brought about a state of things in which the Hindu community has by way of compromise, come to put up with breaches of caste observances to a certain extent—but only to a certain extent—beyond which it does not at present seem disposed to extend its tolerance. To an England-returned man it simply says this: "you may or may not believe in caste; I am only concerned with your public conduct, your conduct on social occasions; if it is consistent with caste ordinances, I don't care what you do in the privacy of your home, and if not you must go." Now I ask my radical friend, what more latitude do you want for yourself? Where is your principle compromised if you enter your community on those terms. There is no hypocrisy, no deception, no double-dealing when your conduct is neither intended nor calculated to deceive any body, for who is so simple-minded as to believe that you feel any romantic attachment for caste? But at the same time be sure that so long as Hindu society does not undergo considerable changes which will be the work of centuries, so long as millions of Hindus are ignorant, or are bred up in the old school; so long as Hindu women do not come under the influence of the new light and



there are hardly more than a score of such women outside Calcutta and Bombay, caste system, an institution of immemorial antiquity, which has made its impression upon every nerve and fibre of our social organism, will continue to exist, and nothing but quiet and gentle compromises extending over a long space of time, will be found efficacious enough to dissolve its bonds. The way to break the strength of Hindu orthodoxy is not, if I may use a phrase which the Boer war has brought into fashion, by making frontal attacks upon its impregnable positions behind caste-entrenchments, but by turning its flanks by going round and marking those weak points in its organization which cannot be well defended against the pressure of new forces.

What are we to wait it may be urged, till the bulk of the Hindu community is prepared to renounce caste? Are we to reform only such abuses as everybody is prepared to give up? Are we to follow Pope's prudent advice.

"Be not the first by whom the new are tried  
Not yet the last to lay the old aside?"

By no means; but consider that before you attempt to bring about any change, you must prepare the public mind for it, you must change men's opinion first, before you can hope to change their conduct. And what is the Hindu public opinion in regard to caste? Is it really in favour of abolishing caste? Is it even ripe enough to allow a free discussion of the question at a mixed gathering? Have we forgotten plague-riots and the Sanatan Dharam Demonstrations? Well, the fact is that anti-caste opinions are not tolerated by the Hindu community; much less can we expect it to tolerate their realization in practice. Educate public opinion upon this question; you will find even this apparently simple process somewhat long and laborious. Reforms attempted in haste are often repented at leisure. An open crusade against caste can end only in disaster; for I consider it nothing short of disaster that the Hindu community should by

the action of an aggressive and reckless radicalism be driven into the arms of the reactionary movements which have of late created so much stir and unrest in the country. Periods of transition have their inconveniences and inconsistencies, but they have to be borne, compromises have to be effected; the old does not die without a struggle, the new is not born without travails. Our rapid reformers would do well to pardon the words of Mr. Herbert Spencer:—

“For it cannot be too emphatically asserted that this policy of compromise, alike in institutions, in actions and in beliefs, is a policy essential to a society going through the transitions caused by continued growth and development. The illogicalities and the authorities to be found so abundantly in current opinions and existing arrangements are those which inevitably arise in the course of perpetual re-adjustments to circumstances perpetually changing. Ideas and institutions proper to a past social state, but incongruous with the new social state that has grown out of it, surviving into this new social state they have made possible, and disappearing only as this new social state establishes its own ideas and institutions during their survival in conflict with these new ideas and institutions necessarily furnish elements of contradiction in men's thoughts and deeds. And yet as, for the carrying on of social life, the old must continue so long as the new is not ready, this perpetual compromise is an indispensable accompaniment of a normal development. Just as injurious as it would be to an amphibian to cut off its bronchia before its lungs were well-developed, so injurious must it be to a society to destroy its old institutions before the new have become organised enough to take their places” (*Study of Sociology*).

Some would construe this into a plea for maintaining the *status quo*. They think that because they and their friends are prepared for certain reforms, therefore the

whole country is prepared for them. Some of them even go the length of saying that if the Hindu population is not going to submit to them, they will form a separate society of their own. Carlyle says somewhere, "Two or three gentlemen have met in a room and have said. Go to, we will make a religion." So these gentlemen want to make a society of the elect—without caste, without Hindu principles, without old traditions. In their eyes moderation is the virtue of cowards and compromise the culter of traitors. They will, however, soon find out their mistake. Our social conservatism is too strong to be pulled down in a day. It is being gradually undermined by the tide of modern civilization, tide that moving seems asleep, too full for sound or foam, and it is no part of wisdom to check or retard its progress by exciting into fury the passions and prejudices of a thousand years. Even for bringing about slow changes in our customs and beliefs the zeal and courage of heroes and martyrs will be needed and most effective in breaking the neck of Hindu orthodoxy will be those who will remain in their society and not those who go out of it.\*

\*Reprinted from a collection of interesting papers on Indian Social Reform, edited by Mr. C. Y. Chintamani.

## THE FORMATION AND EXPRESSION OPINION IN INDIA.\*

### I.

One very striking feature of modern India is the prominent part taken by our young men who have scarcely passed out of their student life, in all our liberal movements, in politics, in religion, in education, and in the sphere of social reform. Some lament, some rejoice over this phenomenon. It is admitted that in all countries old men are, as a rule, conservative; averse to change and willing to leave things as they are; but it is not so generally admitted that in India, owing to causes, which lie on the surface, the phenomenon was inevitable—it was inevitable that young men here should be more conspicuous in the field of public life than in any country in Europe, that in their time of life they should be ambitious of playing a part which is generally thought to belong to mature manhood. Unlike England or France or Germany where the national mind has advanced by a gradual process of evolution, and where there has been no sudden break between the past and the present, India has undergone a sudden revolution since the advent of British rule; and English learning and English civilization have reared up a generation of men, who feel little mental sympathy with the mass of their countrymen, and who have learnt to put aside old beliefs either with respect or with contempt. In point of learning and information they consider themselves, and are in fact, superior to those who have hitherto escaped European influences, and they alone feel that discontent with the present and that hope of a better future which constitute the springs of progress. This being the case, it is only natural that they should not, in the departments of social and intellectual

\* Reprinted from the Hindustan Review edited by the Hon'ble Mr. Sachchidanand Sinha Bar-at-Law, Member Behar Executive Council.

activity, wait for the call of their elders, but should press forward on what they consider to be the road to improvement, without paying much heed to the conservation of forces of their society. They are the most active, some would say the most noisy—in every liberal movement, for they are the only class of Indians who have assimilated, and who therefore are in a position to disseminate, new ideas among their countrymen—the only available material out of which any reforming body can be organised. The thoughts and sentiments of these young men exercise a considerable influence upon the liberal opinion of their country, as distinguished from the yet more powerful body of conservative opinion upon which the educated class, taken as a whole, has as yet been able to make slight impression; although it can hardly be doubted that the future belongs to Liberalism. However, that the liberal opinion of the country—the only body of opinion with which I am at present concerned, and which expresses itself through the press, on the platform, and through numerous other channels—the fact that this opinion is in no small measure, influenced by the thoughts and sentiments of young men, has to be looked full in the face; and since, whether we like it or not, we cannot on the one hand prevent these young men from exerting their influence upon opinion, nor on the other, set up any counter-influence to check or modify its shortcomings, the question of the formation of opinions and their expression by our young men becomes one of supreme interest and significance, for next to right conduct there is no element more important or necessary for the progress of a nation than the habit of right thinking in its members. Before I proceed further I may be allowed to make one preliminary remark here.

One of the truths taught by Social Science is that in every society there is a certain definite correspondence between its institutions and beliefs and the stage of progress which it has reached. Absolutism in politics goes with

absolutism in religion, and implicit obedience to the head of the state with implicit obedience to the head of the family. When there is no questioning the will of the ruler, there is no questioning the will of the pater familias, when everything is fixed in politics, everything is fixed in religion, in morals, in education, in domestic relations. Those ages which have seen political persecutions have also witnessed the burning of heretics. Think of Phillip II of Spain, of Mary Tudor of England, of the Spanish Inquisition and of the English Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission. Those were the days of domestic slavery and female subjection. Liberty of thought and discussion were proscribed; and the heads of the Church and the State were the guardians of the conscience and the intellect of the European world. Causes came into operation into which it is not necessary to enter here, which weakened the basis of political despotism almost simultaneously with that of religious despotism. Those who asserted individual liberty in temporal matters were soon compelled to rebel against the tyranny of the Catholic Church. The heroes of the Reformation were also the heroes of the great movements which loosened the bonds of feudalism and destroyed forever the Divine right of kings. The power of the master over the serf was destroyed; the status of women was raised; sons were freed from the despotic sway of their fathers. Education, from being the monopoly of the privileged classes was thrown open to the masses. A certain measure of tolerance was established, and freedom of thought and discussion was founded. The regime of status in which every thing was fixed passed away, the regime of contract in which every man was free to live as he pleased, so long as he did not interfere with the like freedom of others, came. So that now in countries where Government is popular there is religious freedom, social freedom, popular education, liberty of the press, free expression of all sorts

of opinions. While in countries like Russia or Turkey, despotism in Government is seen in company with absolutism in religion; the press is kept under a strict censorship; opinion is found to keep itself within the limits imposed upon it by the ruling authorities; and the life of the individual is fettered by the arbitrary ordinances of the State.

Now under British influence India is undergoing a change similar to that which has passed over Europe; and along with the dissolution of the old order is going on the evolution of a new, more or less in harmony with the spirit of modern civilization. We, too, are passing from the regime of status to that of contract; but the state of transition necessarily involves a conflict between the two regimes: there is liberty side by side with bondage; modern science and philosophy side by side with our old systems of thought and learning; modern scepticism side by side with the huge fabrics of Hindu and Mahomedan ecclesiasticism; a free press side by side with a Government popular in form but despotic in principle; Brahmo and Christian propaganda side by side with Theosophy and the Sanatan Dharma; the social and political Conferences side by side with the cow-killing riots, the Mohurrum celebrations and the Jagannath festival. There is the anglicised Indian who is an ardent apostle of political and social liberty to whom his own religion is a mere superstition, and who in his ardour for the present wants to cancel the whole past; there is the orthodox Indian who reads in modern civilization the doom of the world, whose golden age is in the past, and to whom all reform spells revolution and national death. There are schools for female education on the one hand; there are the parda system and child-marriages on the other. There are social reformers bent upon uprooting the evils of their obsolete customs and practices; there are those who would

not lend them the Congress pandal\* to hold their meeting. There is a free press no doubt, but there are also the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* at one extreme and the *Bangabasi* at another. This confusion of a far reaching conflict—this hurly-burly of disorder—we witness in every sphere of our social life. It is inevitable; perhaps at times, it is even desirable. I am not sure that in India it is an unmitigated evil. The impact of western civilization was bound to produce the tremendous collision it has done, but without this tremendous collision it is doubtful if India would ever have been awakened from its long majestic sleep. But in as much as this is a time of conflict and confusion, when all sorts of thoughts and sentiments are fermenting in men's minds, it is difficult to preserve a judicial frame of mind and to see things as they are. Yet difficult though it may be to do so, it has to be borne in mind that opinion rules the world, that in India to bring to an end the present chaotic state of things, it is necessary that the educated classes should realise the extreme importance not only of expressing whatever opinion they happen to form, but of assuring themselves by every means in their power that the opinions they form are correct and sound. It is not easy to form right opinions; it requires the discipline of a life-time to be able to do so with any amount of success. And when causes are present, as they are in India, which excite men's passions and prejudices to an unusual degree, the forming of right judgments becomes a thing next to impossible. The free expression of opinion is one of the dogmas of our reformers; I doubt if they are equally anxious to know the fitness of any opinion for the purpose of its publication. And even when an opinion is right, is that always a sufficient justification for one to express it when he pleases and how he pleases? Since few among us realise fully the difficulties which the formation of right opinions involve; and fewer

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\* Mr. Tilak's party actually prevented this Social Conference from being held in the Congress Pavilion at Poona. *Editor.*



still the deep responsibility which attaches to the expressing of them, even when we have assured ourselves of their rightness, considering the peculiar phase of civilization through which we are passing, I propose in the following pages, first to submit some observations on the formation of opinions, and then to point out some considerations which must be kept in mind by those to whom the free expression and publication of opinions is not a mere intellectual sport and show-fight, but a serious duty, a painful but necessary struggle against beliefs and institutions which they have come to regard as false and pernicious.

First then as to the formation of opinions.

Every opinion is composed of two elements, intellectual and emotional. At the bottom of every judgment there is invariably present some feeling which colours and moulds it. Later on, I will show that every conviction has likewise some intellectual judgment underlying it, from which it derives its complexion. Confining myself for the present, however, to the intellectual ingredients of our opinion, I may say that roughly speaking they are four:— (1) perception or (to use a word which serves our present purpose better) observation (2) memory (3) reason, and (4) imagination. Facts of experience being the material of opinion, they must be observed before we can proceed a step further. Then they must be remembered—must be registered in the brain for the purpose of comparison and contrast between various sorts of experiences. The function of reason is to discern the correspondences that may seem to exist between these various sorts of registered experiences. Lastly the function of imagination is to bring vividly before the mind the images of the impression registered in the memory, to make fresh combinations out of them, and thus to enable reason to perceive fresh correspondences among them. The soundness of every idea in judgment depends upon a right and harmonious working of

all these found powers. If the power of observation is weak, memory will have few facts to record and those not very accurately. If memory is weak, the fact supplied by the observing faculty will be lost, and there will not be enough material for reason, from which to draw its inferences. If reason is weak no amount of facts will enable it to discern the real correspondences existing between them, and its judgment will be faulty. If imagination will not be sufficiently disciplined, it will not present to the mind accurate images of observed facts, will not be able to present their hidden and remote aspects, and consequently will not enable the mind to hit upon those thoughts which mere intellectual analysis cannot reach. Thus it would appear that for a sound mental development the cultivation of the powers of observation, memory, reason, and imagination is necessary, and the aim of all sound mental development is to enable men to form correct judgments.

Now it is a truism that the mental, like the bodily, organs develop by exercise, and dwindle by disuse. Man is a creature of habits. Even the most ignorant admits the force of habit upon our physical construction. The tropical man cannot live in Norway. The Englishman cannot be fed upon our special food. The opium-eater gets addicted to a certain mode of life. All this is admitted, but what is not so generally admitted is that mind is as much amenable to habit as body. Mental habits are formed by exercise, and when once formed, become, in most cases, second nature. Right thinking like the doing of everything else, is a matter of discipline and habit. Nothing is so irksome to man as thinking, and it is only by arduous and continuous efforts that he learns to think rightly. It, therefore, becomes the highest aim of all education to form in him the habit of right thinking, that is, to develop in him in their proper and symmetrical proportion those faculties of the mind which are essential to the forming of right judgments.

Judged by this standard it can hardly be said that our youth receive the training necessary for the forming of right opinions. The fault in a considerable measure lies with our educational system. The charge is often brought that system has not been justified by its results. In their Report on the Indian Universities, the Commissioners, although they do not go so far, say that having visited a considerable number of these institutions, we are not disposed to confirm the sweeping condemnation which has sometimes been passed upon our University system. Many of the Colleges command the service of able and devoted teachers; and we do not consider the student as a class to be wanting either in natural talent or in industry..... Taking all the facts into account we see no reason to regret the determination at which the Government arrived in 1854."

Yet they are constrained to remark:—At the same time we must admit that the acquirements of Indian graduates are inadequate and superficial. We make every allowance for the difficulties of a student who has to receive instruction in a foreign language.....But after all allowance is made, it is most unsatisfactory to be told that the Indian B. A. not unfrequently lacks the general training which he requires to fit him for the business life, or for a further course of study. The education Commissioners of 1882 made the following observations:—So too, of the recipients of our college education it is by no means pretended that they are the very crown and flower of Indian humanity. Many unlovely defects of character still give occasion of scorn to those who are nothing if not critical. Of superficial learning and of pretentious self assertion manifested in a variety of ways, there has no doubt been plenty..... The surroundings of the Indian student are not always favourable to the development of a high type of character.....Living in an atmosphere of ignorance his sense of superiority is in danger of becoming hardened. Reverence for the current forms of the religion of his country

seems difficult to him, when face to face with dogmas which science has exploded, and a disposition to scoff does not beautify his nature .....The narrow circle of his life, the absence of facilities for travel, whereby his sympathies and experience might be enlarged; the strong temptation to lay aside his studies so soon as employment supplies his moderate necessities; the scanty inducement to fit himself for higher duties—all help to dwarf the moral and intellectual growth and to foster those faults, against which satirists, good-humoured or bitter, have directed so many shafts.\*

The testimony of another eminent educationist, the late Sir M. Monier-Williams, may also be quoted here:—In traversing India from North to South, from East to west, I visited many high schools, examined many classes, conversed with many young Indians under education at our Colleges, and was brought into contact with a large number who had passed the university matriculation examination, as well as with a few who had taken their degrees, and earned distinction for high proficiency. I certainly met some really well-educated men, like Rao Bahadur Gopal Hari Deshmuk, lately appointed a joint Judge who, by their character and acquirements, were fitted to fill any office or shine in any society. But in plain truth, I was not always favourably impressed with the general results of our higher educational efforts. I came across a few well-informed men, many half-informed men, and a great many ill-informed men—men, I mean without true strength of character and with ill-balanced minds. Such men may have read a great deal, but if they think at all, think loosely. Many are great talkers. They may be said to suffer from attacks of verbal diarrhoea, and generally talk plausibly but write inaccurately. They are not given to much sustained exertion. Or if such men act at all, they act as if

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\* In this connection the illuminative chapter on Student Life in Bengal in the Sadler Commission Report must be read. *Edit or.*

guided by no settled principles, and as if wholly irresponsible for their spoken and written words. They know nothing of the motive power, restraining force, or comforting efficacy of steadfast faith, in any religious system whatever, whether false or true. They neglect their own languages, disregard their own literatures, abjure their own religions, despise their own philosophies, break their own caste rules, and deride their own time-honoured customs, without becoming good English scholars, honest sceptics, wise thinkers, earnest Christians, or loyal subjects of the British Empire.

It is not necessary to agree with every word of what these eminent authorities have said in order to admit the truth contained in their remarks. Our Educational system has not succeeded in creating in our youth the habit and the power of intelligent thinking, whatever it may have made of them as writing or speaking machines. And how could it have succeeded? When a student can specialise in his studies from the Entrance class, when he may know the Geography of Timbuctoo without knowing anything about his own province or country, when he may take his B. A. degree in philosophy or what is called the Literary Course without knowing anything of History or Political Economy, when a degree in Science may be obtained without his having to learn the elements of Logic; when one may be taught every thing about the "mind" of Shakespeare, the number of editions his works have undergone, the mistakes and misprints which so many clever critics have been able to discover in them, without being able to appreciate the beauties of Hamlet or The Tempest or Macbeth, when we can be taught to satisfy any examiner all about the Achean League and the Peloponissian war and the struggles between the Roman and the Teuton without knowing anything of the early European settlements in India, and the causes of the decline and fall of the Mogul Empire; when again any professor who has the knack of

making his students pass examinations can be allowed to teach out B. A.'s and M. A.'s, when trained teachers are a rare commodity and the methods of teaching are adapted to the end of passing examinations, when there is no free and sympathetic intercourse between teachers and students—the former ignorant of the mental and moral susceptibilities of the latter, who feel an equal estrangement from the former and are impervious to whatever influence these may be capable of exercising—when these are the conditions under which our young receive English education, is it at all wonderful if they exhibit those mental and moral defects which their critics are never slow to point out in them; if in their case even when knowledge may seem to have come, wisdom still lingers, if they are not able to think intelligently upon the problems which beset them all round, and if the opinions which they form and sometimes publish upon the current questions of the day, cause so much amusement to the carping critic and so much regret to their sincerest well-wishers? Although much might be said in condemnation of the existing educational system and of the extent to which it is responsible for the absence of habits of right thinking in our young men, yet I do not aspire to sit in the seat of the scornful, and not being so wise as the University Education Commissioners, I refrain from offering any suggestions as to how that system should be improved. Besides I have touched upon this point only to indicate here briefly as one of the primary causes which prevent even the acquisition of European learning from imparting to our young men that mental discipline which is so essential to the forming of sound opinions.

But schools and colleges can do little for those for whom their parent and society do nothing. The foundations of mental and moral development of every man are laid at home; the nursery is the training ground for the school. But in this country this is not the case. As in the

pre-revolutionary France, before Rousseau's teachings had exploded like a bomb-shell in the midst of the artificial life of that period, ladies disclaimed to suckle their own children but left them to be suckled and brought up by nurses, so in modern Indian parents finding it too troublesome to train their children leave them to be trained by private tutors and at schools. This in itself must deprive a boy of that sympathetic bringing-up which only his home-influences can impart; but when we take into consideration the fact that in most cases his school experiences contradict his home-experiences, that what he learns at one place he has unlearn at another, we can at once realise the serious mental and moral consequences which result to his soft, plastic nature. Think of what he is taught at school—a history which takes no account of the sun and moon dynasties, of wars waged in heaven like the famous battle of Titans against the gods; a geography in which the seas of milk and curd dot not appear nor any countries peopled with strange beings in the bowels of the earth; a physical geography which ignores the agency of Indra in accounting for the phenomena of cloud and rain and thunder, a literature saturated mostly with a secular spirit, bearing only here and there the impress of an alien religion, permeated throughout with ideas and beliefs which are compendiously expressed in the well-known formula of "Liberty, Equality Fraternity," think of this education on the one hand, and then think, on the other, of the Education he receives at home, the fables of Hindu mythology as he hears them from the lips of his mother, the stirring episodes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the sanctity of the caste system, the eternal subjection of women, the sinfulness of departing by one hair's breadth from tradition and custom; the greatness of his race in the Golden age, its degeneracy in the present Iron age, to be followed by the day of judgment. These contradictory teachings cannot fail to produce

strange results; and in the case of our young men one or two such results may be noticed which throw a most interesting light upon the anarchy and confusion that mark the public opinion of India.

The conflict of Eastern and Western civilizations as it manifests itself in those contradictory teachings of home and school has produced two classes of men, the who dazzled by the glamour of the latter see nothing worthy of regard or admiration in the former; and those who, carried to the other extreme by an equally natural reaction, and repelled by the materialistic tendencies of the present, find their highest ideals of conduct and religions in the past. The Brahmo Samaj and the Social reform movements are among the products of Western influences, but so are also Theosophy and the Sanatan Dharma. To the new leaven are due both the liberal and the reactionary movements of the day. The mass of the population that has not yet been touched by modern thought show no activity whatever. Wherever there is activity, even when it is at war with modern civilization, it owes its origin to this very civilization. Anyhow these contradictory tendencies—liberal and reactionary—must go far to disturb and deflect the currents of opinion in India, and deprive it of that uniformity, consistency, force and fervour that mark the public opinion of a country, where men are united on the fundamental principles of life and conduct. Here we find uncompromising advocates of the old order, side by side with the uncompromising upholders of the new. The liberal party treats the claims of authority and tradition as unworthy of serious consideration, the conservative rejects those of reason and free discussion with unconcealed scorn. Those who are so familiar with such classics as Milton's *Areopagitica*, Locke's *Essay, on Toleration* and Mill's *Essay on Liberty*, do not need being reminded of the rights of reason and the value of free discussion;



but it may not be out of place to plead here for the just claims of authority and tradition as important and necessary agents in the formation of opinions.

I yield to none in my adherence to the noble teachings contained in Mill's Essay on Liberty, and I consider that the progress of India as well as of every other country must be judged by the extent to which it is prepared to accept them and carry them into practice. But I must also point out the influence which authority and tradition exercise upon the mental and moral progress of mankind, and which we cannot afford to ignore. The 'unity of history' 'the connective tissue of civilisation' the 'education of the human race' are not figures of speech, but embody a profound physiological truth; that each succeeding generation is organically connected with the preceding generation, that customs which seem obsolete now, at one time served useful purpose in the order of evolution, that what we think and feel and do has been impressed upon our organization by the experience of countless ages, that every man physically and mentally is as much a child of the past as he is a parent of the future these, are truisms. In other words, in every man as well as in every generation of men, there is an element of change and an element of stability—a tendency to live the life our fathers have lived before us, and a tendency to strike out fresh variations from that life. Authority and tradition represent what is stable in human society, reason and liberty what is changing. The force of authority on one side and that of liberty on the other—these are two forces—centripetal and centrifugal—which have governed the course of human progress since history began. Sometimes the one, sometimes the other has prevailed. History is strewn with the wrecks of nations which stuck to authority too long when change was needed, or which tried to break with the past before they had become fit for a new departure.

In India, I freely admit, authority has lasted too long and the revolt against its tyranny is perfectly justifiable. It is the chief function of our Liberalism to wage a strenuous struggle against the forces of tradition and prescription which stand in the way of our national progress. But for that very reason it is necessary that we should husband all our resources, that instead of throwing away the hoarded capital of the past and starting with Lord Rosebery's 'clean slate', we should take care to preserve as much of the old as has not yet lost its use in our social economy, and bearing well in mind the conservative nature of our society, should do nothing by any excuses on our part to drive it into the arms of the reactionary movements which are beginning to raise their head in this country.

The influence of authority in matters of opinion is a very potent influence. From childhood up to adult age we live under that influence. The most independent mind cannot do without it. The experience of the individual can never be equal to the experience of the race. National traditions even when they contain enough which is true, throw a considerable light upon causes and circumstances which made them accepted as true. John Stuart Mill was not a stickler for authority and, tradition nor for the loose beliefs and opinions of the multitude. But hear what he says upon the point in his admirable essay on "Bentham".

"Unless it can be asserted that mankind did not know anything until logicians taught it to them—that until the last hand has been but to a moral truth by giving it a metaphysically precise expression, all the previous hewing which it has undergone by the common intellect at the suggestion of common wants and common experience is to go for nothing, it must be allowed, that, even the originality which can, and the courage which dares, think for itself, is not a more necessary part of the philosophical character than a thoughtful regard for previous thinkers, and for the collective mind of the human race. What has been the opinion of mankind,

has been the opinion of persons of all tempers and dispositions, of all partialities and pre-possessions, of all varieties in position, in education, in opportunities of observation and inquiry. No one inquirer is all this; every inquirer is either young or old, rich or poor, sickly or healthy, married or unmarried, meditative or active, a poet or a logician, an ancient or a modern, a man or a woman, and if a thinking person, has, in addition, the accidental peculiarities of his individual modes of thought. Every circumstance which gives a character to the life of a human being carries with its peculiar biases, its peculiar facilities for perceiving some things, and for missing or forgetting others. But from points of view different from his, different things are perceptible; and none are more likely to have seen what he does not see, than those who do not see what he sees. The general opinion of mankind is the average of the conclusions of all minds stripped indeed of their choicest and most recondite thought, but freed from their twists and partialities, a net result in which everybody's particular point of view is represented, no body's is predominant. The collective mind does not penetrate below the surface, but it sees all the surface; which profound thinkers, even by reason of their profundity, often fail to do. their intesder view of a thing in some of its aspects diverting their attention from others

We cannot, therefore, say that we can do without authority only what as rational beings we should do it to give is a provisional assent under certain well-defined conditions. These are four which in this connection we must keep in mind. We must be assured, first, of the veracity of the man whose opinion we adopt, secondly, of his competency to from that opinion; thirdly that his opinion has come to us in all its integrity and fourthly, that when that opinion may seem to go counter to our ordinary experiences, tere are means whereby its truth or falsity may be tested subject to these conditions authority is one of most important factors in the in the forming of right judgments.

The part of the subject under consideration may be looked at from another standpoint. All progress, social or political, depends upon organised action which must rest upon organised opinion. Common interests, pursuits, and intellectual sympathies go far to consolidate opinion—to cement its scattered and jarring fragments into a solid and coherent mass—but the most powerful of these forces has always been authority—the agreement of the members of a society upon something which is fixed and is not to be called in question. And prescription is one of the essential elements of authority. The mind of man has an instinctive leaning to the past, an innate disposition to follow tradition. The orthodox party in India possess this important element of social cohesion and stability. They have a fixed body of beliefs upon which they are united; the authority of tradition is their chief guide amid the puzzles and perplexities of every day life, which they follow the more steadily and passionately, the more they find themselves deserted by the light of reason. The educated party fails to exercise any considerable influence upon the people, because when its reasoning fails to convince them of the truth of its teachings, there remains nothing else to which it can appeal—no authority of national traditions and history which would be respected by the people. The man who in the midst of a vernacular speech or in reply to some criticism quotes a verse of Tulsi Dass or recites an anecdote from the Ramayana produces a far deeper impression upon his audience than those who quote Milton, Burke, Mill, and Macaulay. The educated party are disunited and disorganised among themselves because they are not like the orthodox party united upon any principle which for any practical purposes may be considered beyond question, which apart from having its roots in their reason draws its sap from their sentiments as well, and to which they can appeal as an enduring fact in their history.

However, versed in European learning, they have neglected to cultivate their own literature and history, and the consequence is that they do not possess sufficient insight into the minds of their people, cannot sympathise with their mental peculiarities, cannot speak the language which they can understand, and they repel rather than attract them by making before them a parade of their foreign learning. There can hardly be any doubt that much of the literary activity of the educated classes fails to produce any appreciable effect upon the Indian society, because being carried on in English, it does not reach the popular mind, and because on account of its alien character strange illustrations, foreign precedents, unfamiliar allusions even those who understand the language are not very much affected by it. The break-up of the sentiment of obedience to authority which is so manifest in the Hindu society and is exercising a disintegrating influence upon it has not proceeded quite so far among the Mahomedans, and so they have among them a solidarity of thought and sentiments which the Hindus do not possess. You will meet Hindus by the thousand who would not hesitate to express their revolt against Hinduism but not one in a thousand, among the Mohammadans who would speak disrespectfully of Islam or its founder and apostles. The most enlightened Mohammadans have a respect for the authority of their traditions which the Hindus do not have for theirs; and this deference to authority has enabled the Mohamedan minority, less wealthy and educated than the Hindus, to accept the leadership of Sir Syed Ahmed, and to co-operate with him in founding a College the like of which neither the millionaires of Bombay nor the landed magnates of Bengal, with the rhetorical flood of twenty-two Congresses behind their back, have been able to produce. Before leaving this point, I may state here what strikes me as a very suggestive phenomenon in Modern India;

and it is that every one of our movements—social, moral, or religious—has been started and led by men who had studied their own national literature and history, who were proud of their past, and with all their innovating zeal had a respect for its authority, who since religion is the most prominent feature of our national life, were more or less religious reformers, and who in order to reach the minds of the masses, made considerable efforts to revive and improve the vernaculars of the country. The last century opened with the great name of Raja Ram Mohun Roy, who was a social as well as a religious reformer—the founder of Brhmoism on the one hand and the destroyer of Sutticism and the very first advocate of English education on the other—and who was also the father of modern Bengali literature. The leaders of thought in Bengal who came after him—men like Devendra Nath Tagore, Keshub Chander Sen, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar and others equally eminent—these were ardent and admiring students of their own literature—were reformers who drew their inspiration from the past no less than from the present and who, upon some of the most fundamental points, accepted the creed of their forefathers. Swami Dayananda was obviously a conservative reformer and founded a movement, which on account of its indigenous character, its respect for the past, and its firm and unfaltering advocacy of some of the basal principles of religion and morals that have moulded the destinies of our race, is the most powerful, because it is the most truly national organisation within the pale of the Hindu community. In our own day we have watched the lives and works of Ranade and Telang—men as much imbued with the modern spirit as any of their contemporaries, who were among the most ardent advocates of Sanskrit learning, who invited their people to accept the new lights but not by turning their backs upon the old; who while no “revivalists” could yet say, as Ranade said on a memorable occasion in words

that have the ring of a born reformer: "This land of ours is the land of promise. This race of ours is the chosen race."

Now what do these facts show? To my mind they show two things; first, that these reformers were successful because they were able to interpret the thoughts and sentiments of their people and had an insight into the needs of the times; because their belief in the elements of their national greatness born of their study of their national literature, lent force and fervour to their energies, and because they adhered to certain fundamental principles of religion and morality which entered into the spiritual fibre of their fellow countrymen, and secondly that in order to be able to understand the minds of one's people, one should know their historic antecedents, should be in a position to look at things from their stand-point, should, beneath the error of a thousand years, be able by the force of intellectual sympathy to discern the grain or substratum of truth that lies there, and should have the tact of presenting to the popular mind new truths in the form with which it is familiar. If this be the true moral of the facts just cited, then it becomes clear that the study of our national literature and history is an important and essential discipline for the forming of right opinions not only in regard to the past but also in regard to the present, that it would go far to check that weakening of the sentiment of deference to authority, without which, as already pointed out no body of opinion can exist in a stable and consolidated state, and would give us rational grounds for cherishing that sentiment.

Before leaving this point let me put the reader on his guard against one misapprehension which may arise here. It may be thought, considering that I have laid so much stress upon that importance of the element of authority in matters of opinion and have advocated the study of

Sanskrit literature as a means of strengthening the conservative sentiment in us, that I do not sympathise with the forward movements of our day, that I do not sufficiently appreciate the vivifying and expansive force of liberty and may be classed with those who have cast in their lot with the Sanatan Dharma and the "revivalists". Now, this would be a complete misapprehension of my position. I do not believe in "revivalism" nor in the imaginary Vedic civilisation taught by some over-zealous members of the Arya Samaj, nor in the regeneration of India by means of Sanskrit literature. What I think upon these matters it is not necessary for me to say on this occasion. My object in dwelling upon the place of authority in matters of opinion, and in pointing out the value of Sanskrit literature to us at the present, is to draw attention to an element in the formation of opinion which is in danger of being neglected—an element which, from a purely intellectual point of view, deserves to be taken into consideration, although in the sphere of practical reform, each section of the Indian community must decide, according to its own mental and moral conditions, as to how far it should allow its own course of progress to be influenced by the spirit of authority on the one hand. and that of liberty on the other. The only point which I am not prepared to concede is that Indians can ever be able to break completely away from their past, or that it would be to their good should this ever become possible.

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In the first part of this essay printed in the last issue of this review I treated of some of the intellectual elements that enter into the composition of opinions in general, and advanced some considerations which apply to India in particular. It remains now to show that besides intellectual there are also emotional or moral elements which more or less colour every opinion, which mould it this way or that, as they themselves are influenced by circumstances, and without a right cultivation of which no high and inspiring thoughts can be produced. Generally speaking, every thought excites in the mind a certain amount of some corresponding feeling which varies with the amount of interest one has in the object of his thought. Up to a point the feeling or emotion gives help and sustenance in the process of thinking. Under the stress of feelings men do deeds and think thoughts which they could not do in their more pacific moments. The saying that 'necessity is the mother of invention' only means that impelled by strong desires man puts forth extraordinary mental and moral efforts; his mind becomes unusually active, he runs great risks and makes great sacrifices, and hoping against hope but manned by his own feelings, achieves results that excite the wonder and admiration of mankind. But while admitting that to a certain extent even interest and passion are incentives to thinking, it must also be stated that if left unchecked and uncontrolled by better and higher feelings they become injurious to it. Men are everywhere under the influence of passions and prejudices—racial, social, moral, political, and religious, ready to believe what accords with their own feelings, unwilling to see and often incapable of seeing things as they are. We often notice the intellectual causes of erroneous judgments, but seldom their moral causes. But it is a truth, that the channels along which the currents of a man's thought flow are engineered by his feelings—his likes, and dislikes, hatreds and affections, hopes

and fears, tastes and inclinations; that, in other words, his character moulds and modifies his intellect. He sees what his emotional nature disposes him to see, and he can seldom see anything else. The zealous Arya Samajist sincerely finds nothing good in any other system except his own; to the orthodox Hindu he is simply a misguided and a mischievous enthusiast. The history of religious persecutions is one long and lamentable illustration of the truth that passion is one of the worst causes that prevent judgment. We may, therefore, judge how difficult the process of right thinking is how at every turn it is liable to being deflected by passion and prejudice, and what strong moral forces must be present to check and counteract their baneful influence.

Now let us see if in India the conditions are favourable to the development of those elements in our national character which alone can combat those inbred moral failings which are so lamentably reflected in our opinions and beliefs, and without the correcting of which the healthy growth of our public opinion, yet in the germ, cannot be insured.

It is enough to point out briefly here some of the salient features of our national life in order to be able to judge the serious moral influence they must exercise upon the trend of our public opinion. We have no moral education at home because our parents cannot give it, we have none at schools and colleges because they will not. Our mothers, wives, sisters and daughters are ignorant, and from our infancy beliefs are instilled into our minds in the sanctity of certain dogmas and conventions, at schools and colleges, as already stated we learn a different lesson. Old ideals have faded, or are fast fading away from our vision, and the new one is barely visible even to the most clear-sighted among us. Our priests cannot teach us religion and morality; and our rulers are unwilling to undertake the task both on grounds of policy and because they know that their ways are not ours. In this state of confusion there is every temptation to

form all sorts of haphazard opinions and to give full play to the promptings of passion and interest in shaping those opinions. Thinking costs pain because it requires a steady resistance to personal biases and preconceived notions. But nobody suffers pain without a motive; and to have a motive, as we know, is to desire the gratification of some feeling. Now, next to the religious sentiment, the emotions which are most patent in exercising a steadying and sobering influence upon thinking and in supplying the energy to carry it on honestly and without prejudice, are the love of truth and the passion for social good, which, if they are not acquired by strenuous efforts in young age, are seldom, if ever acquired afterwards.

History bears ample testimony to the fact that the production of great thoughts has generally been preceded or accompanied by an outburst of some powerful moral sentiments. At one time it is patriotism, at another religion here the love of truth, there the passion for social good. The Elizabethan age in England, the Reformation in Germany the Renaissance in Italy, the outburst of literary activity in France before the Revolution, sufficiently illustrate the stimulating and expansive influence which the awakening of strong moral emotions exercises upon the awakening of the national intellect. The moral atmosphere which surrounds a people must rise to a certain degree of temperature before they can produce high and noble thoughts; there must be a deep stir in their moral natures to excite their intellects to any unusual degree of activity. But the awakening of the moral sentiments of a nation the growth in it of certain feelings and susceptibilities that find their satisfaction in high thoughts and noble aspirations is not a mere matter of accident. There must be certain agencies and institutions present which alone can foster and diffuse them throughout the whole community.

Ancient Greece, which inspite of its short life, has left behind an immortal memory of its splendid achievements, presents a very striking example of a country where the political and social conditions enabled the people to come into daily contact with men of the highest intellect and the noblest character, to hear their discussions upon the most serious and stirring questions of the day, and thus to receive their instruction, in the best sense of the word, from those who could give them light and leading. The result was that no people of antiquity was more intellectually alive, more generally inspired with lofty ideals, more deeply appreciative of the intellectual and moral worth of those who were really its greatest men, than the Greek. Indeed, this habit of public speaking among the Greeks—this tolerance of free discussion upon almost every subject of practical or speculative interest—the education which they were thus enabled to receive at the hands of their ablest men, has been considered by some as the chief secret of Greek civilization—of that conception of progress which is probably the noblest legacy that Greece has left to the world. With respect to this habit of free and public discussion Grote in his monumental History of Greece remarks:—

It was one of the chief causes of the intellectual eminence of the nation generally. At a time when all the countries around were plunged comparatively in mental torpor, there was no motive sufficiently present and powerful to multiply so wonderfully the productive minds of Greece, except such as arose from the remains of public speaking. The susceptibility of the multitude to this sort of guidance, their habit of requiring and enjoying the stimulus which it supplied, and the open discussion, combining regular forms with free opposition of practical matters, political as well as judicial, are the creative causes which formed such conspicuous adepts in the art of persua-

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sion Nor was it only professed orators who were thus produced. Didactic aptitude was formed in the back ground, and the speculative tendencies were supplied with interesting phenomena for observation and combination at a time when the truths of physical science were almost inaccessible. If the primary effect was to quicken the powers of expression, the secondary, but not less certain result was to develop the habits of scientific thought. Not only the oratory of Demosthenes and Pericles, and the colloquial magic of Socrates, but also the philosophical speculations of Plato, and the systematic politics, rhetoric, and logic of Aristotle, are traceable to the same general tendencies in the minds of the Grecian people, and we find the germ of these expansive forces in the senate and agora of their legendary Government.

In India we have a Government which encourages liberty of thought and discussion, and which has given us access to modern science and learning that have a decided tendency to liberalise the mind and emancipate it from the thralldom of the past. These are circumstances favourable to the growth of a sound and enlightened public opinion, inasmuch as they help to generate in our minds that love of truth and that passion for social good which I consider to be among the chief factors in the formation of right opinions. To have to look at both sides of questions, to express freely what one thinks upon any question, and to hear patiently what others have to say upon it, to place our old notions and beliefs in the new light and see how they look there—this is a discipline, moral no less than intellectual, which free discussion imparts, and thereby fosters that love of truth which in its turn reacts upon the intellect and stimulates it into activity. In the same way the habit of taking part in public affairs, and of rising above the narrow concerns of self in the discharge of public functions affecting the whole nation, is conducive to the

growth of that public spirit and that sense of national duty, in the absence of which men seldom care to think upon the questions of public weal, and which whenever they are present, are among the greatest enlighteners and purifiers and consolidators of public opinion. In this country these considerations apply only to the educated minority who have been more or less touched by the modern spirit, and whose opinion undoubtedly bear the impress of the new social and political conditions which have grown up around them. If they have turned their backs upon the moral and religious teachings of their parents and priests, they have got something better instead—they have got the platform and the press which have taken in their hands their moral no less than their intellectual and political training. As a disseminator of intelligence among the people, the press is a very useful agency. Equally useful is the platform—the means whereby our men of light and leading are enabled to speak to us face to face upon all sorts of questions, and thus help the formation of sound and intelligent opinions. It will not, therefore, be understood from what I proceed to say more about these two institutions that I underrate their usefulness or importance, but my object is to point out one circumstance in their connection with which I do not feel satisfied, and which seems to me fraught with a certain measure of evil.

Now, while it is true that in our public speaking and journalism, we possess instruments for the diffusion of the spirit of intelligent curiosity among the people and for supplying them incentives to interest themselves in public affairs, and thus to develop those patriotic and national sentiments, which in their turn, acting upon the national intellect cannot but exercise a wholesome influence upon the formation of opinions, it is equally true that in certain important respects they fall short intellectually, as well as morally, of the excellence of certain forces which moulded

opinion in the India of pre-English days. In past times nobody could undertake to set himself up as a teacher of his fellows who either in intellect or in character or in both was not really their superior. When freedom of thought was not tolerated, only a very bold and resolute man could dare to assail current beliefs and preach new truths, and such a man is always worth listening to, and the multitude do well in following him. When there were so few incentives to thinking, and knowledge was the special monopoly of some privileged class whose social influence depended upon the possession of that knowledge, the leaders of opinion were those who had fitted themselves for that position, and the philosopher or the moralist, or the religious teacher, was one, who in virtue and wisdom, as a rule, stood at a higher level than the mass of his countrymen. Hence, although the people were relieved of the trouble of forming opinions for themselves, (which no doubt brought on its own evils) yet the opinions which they received from their leaders were the best their age could give, and the moral influence of these spiritual guides upon the national character was on the whole elevating and ennobling. In our time this ascendancy has passed to the public speaker and the journalist; and these are seldom very superior in intellect and character to those whom they undertake to instruct. How many journalists there are in this country for whose opinions any body cares, but such is the power of self-deception in man, that whatever these very journalists write with the editorial "we" is greedily devoured by their readers, accepted by them as the oracles of wisdom, and goes far to determine the drift of the educated public opinion. Truths cannot always be the object of party papers; and there is not the slightest doubt that party-spirit has grown up too soon in modern India. I do not know how it could have been otherwise, but I point out this fact neither for applause nor for censure, but as one deserving the serious consideration of our reformers and statesmen. What kind of in-

fluence is a press likely to have upon our beliefs and convictions, our aims and aspirations, which by the exigencies of party is found on most occasions to indulge in one-sided discussion, which cannot proceed too far upon any point for fear of offending some section of the community, and which carried on, as it is by men, few of whom are really men of any intellectual and moral force, helps constantly to harden in us those superstitions and prejudices, those grovelling aims and selfish instincts, that have all but destroyed in us the sense of spiritual self-respect, and dulled the edge of intellectual veracity. This, I am aware, applies to some extent, to the press in the most advanced countries, yet the peculiar danger to which India is liable is this, that while in England, for instance, side by side with the press there exist other agencies of popular culture to correct and neutralise its evil tendencies, here it is as yet the one engine of instruction, which moves over the largest surface of our public opinion, and grinds down every thought or sentiment which shows signs of rising above the low level of its own mediocre and conventional teachings.

From the drift of the argument, as it has proceeded thus far, the reader will not have failed to observe that while as a purely intellectual act I consider a certain kind of mental discipline necessary for the formation of right opinions, there is a certain kind of moral discipline which I consider equally necessary for the same purpose ; that as certain kinds of knowledge sharpen some of those mental powers without which no correct judgments can be formed, so there are certain moral influences which must be present to prepare and predispose the mind to cherish pure and lofty thoughts. For, to form true and high convictions, whatever intellectual powers it may require, requires a strong, determined, and courageous character. Those who hold their opinions as so many intellectual luxuries, and who are ready to change them at the bidding of interest or con-



venience can hardly understand the self-martyrdom of the earnest and sincere man, who follows his conscience like his lord and sovereign, who discarding all the comfort and happiness that come from the affection and sympathy of friends and relations, accepts unwelcome beliefs, and allies himself with unpopular opinions, who knows no hell but the hell of hypocritical and false beliefs, and to whom truth alone can reveal the beatific vision. This is a heroism of which the world hears little, but which only grows in an atmosphere of pure and generous impulses and noble and lofty ideals.

It is because moral influences act so powerfully upon the formation of opinions that some people have come to think that the emotional or moral elements of human nature have been far more important factors in the progress of mankind than the intellectual. Buckle in under-rating the effect of moral causes upon civilization went to one extreme; and Herbert Spencer in attributing almost everything to character seems to me to have gone to the other. The line of argument by which the preponderating influence of moral causes in human affairs is maintained is somewhat as follows :—

First, it is not cognition but feeling that produces action. The proposition that fire burns produces no action, but when it actually burns my finger, I start, or when I am told that it is about to burn my finger, I start, which is due to the ideal pain realised by my consciousness. So every body knows the evil effects of vicious habits, but ninety-nine per cent. of us are not deterred from them by that knowledge. And so we are led to the large induction, propounded by Spencer in his Social Statics :—

Ideas do not govern and overthrow the world, the world is governed or overthrown by feelings, to which ideas serve only as guides. The social mechanism does not rest finally upon opinion, but almost wholly upon character. No intellectual anarchy, but moral antagonism is the cause of

political crisis. All social phenomena are produced by the totality of human emotions and beliefs of which the emotions are mainly pre-determined, while the beliefs are mainly post-determined.

Secondly, we are told that the mere diffusion of moral precepts has done little towards the moral improvement of mankind, that after 1,900 years of Christian teachings and some 2,400 years of Buddhistic preachings, there is still wickedness in the world, that a considerable proportion of criminals are educated men who know the ordinary causes of morality, that the bulk of mankind "know the best, yet the worst pursue."

Now, the mistake of those who adopt this line of argument seems to me to lie not in what they assert, but in what they deny. If it is true that feelings produce action, is it not equally true that cognitions influence feelings? I start when a pin pricks my foot, but would I walk with the same carelessness in a dark room, if I knew that pins were lying about there? We all know how often the knowledge of dangers overcomes our boldness. If there were not a certain correspondence between our cognitions and feelings—between what we know and what we do—life would be impossible. The blind and those possessing eye-sight would with equal safety or equal danger walk in this world.

Then again, if the knowledge of moral truths does not generally make men good, does it generally make them wise? Or are we to suppose that some of the best men, who under the influence of the most virtuous impulses, committed most serious crimes against humanity, because their knowledge upon some matters was false or imperfect,—as for instance when Marcus Aurelius prevented the spread of Christianity—would not have acted differently if they had known the truth, and that, therefore, strong impulses of virtue and righteousness may be counted among the greatest evils that scourge the human race?

If men, in spite of centuries of moral teachings and preachings, are still far from good, would it be right to infer from this that without them they would have been better? Are there any materials to warrant the conclusion that morally there is no difference between the educated class as a whole and the uneducated as a whole; that those who know the difference between right and wrong, stand on the same moral level, as those who do not; and that, because certain agencies of moral instructions have not been much successful, therefore, no other agencies will succeed?

The argument that the world is governed by feelings and not by ideas and that, therefore, the propagation of intellectual truths goes little way towards raising the moral character of human society has been so well met by John Stuart Mill, that I may be permitted to give here a brief summary of what he says upon the point. In the first place Mill considers ideas to be as potent agents in the progress of mankind as feeling "not because the intellectual is the most powerful part of our nature, but because it is the guiding part, and acts not with its own strength alone, but with the united force of all parts of our nature which it can draw after it. In a social state the feelings and propensities cannot act with their full power, in a determinate direction, unless the speculative intellect places itself at their head. The passions are, in the individual man, a more energetic power than a mere intellectual conviction; but the passions tend to divide, not to unite mankind, it is only by a common belief that passions are brought to work together, and become a collective force, instead of forces neutralising one another . . . . . Personal interests and feelings, in the social state, can only obtain the maximum of satisfaction by means of co-operations, and the necessary condition of co-operations is a common belief". Then proceeding to show that great moral effects have been produced by purely intellectual cause, the same writer observes:—

It was not human emotions and passions which discovered the motion of the Earth, or detected the evidence of its antiquity, which exploded scholasticism, and inaugurated the exploration of Nature; which invented printing paper, and the mariner's compass. Yet the Reformation, the English and French Revolutions and still greater moral and social changes yet to come, are direct consequences of these and similar discoveries.....To say that men's intellectual beliefs do not determine their conduct, is like saying that the ship is moved by the steam and not by the steersman. The steam indeed is the motive power; the steersman, left to himself, could not advance the vessel a single inch, yet it is the steersman's will and the steersman's knowledge which decide in what direction it shall move and whither it shall go.

Now, without attempting to decide between the contentions of two such profound thinkers as Mill and Spencer it may be permissible to state, with special reference to the subject under discussion, that if opinions govern the world, the formation of right opinions becomes obviously important, while if feelings govern the world, the necessity of placing them under the guidance of correct opinions becomes equally apparent. And opinions as we have already seen, require, on the one hand, to be enlightened by a sound system of education, and, on the other, to be suffused with the warmth and glow of some of the noblest elements of the moral nature of men. Thus formed, opinions are among the most powerful factors of human progress. Perhaps, their direct influence in this respect is not considerable, but their indirect influence is, for it is by a gradual process of distillation that they pass into convictions, and convictions are the springs of conduct. The believing man is twice himself, the words that he utters are like "the hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces". Herein

lies the importance of forming right opinions—specially in India at the present moment. On the one hand, we are confronted with problems upon which we must turn either our faces or our backs, there is no middle course. On the other, the pillars and mainstays of the old order are giving way one by one, the light of ancestral faith is burning low, and the voice of ancient traditions has become silent. Like a distracted host, overtaken by a dark stormy night,\* we stand bewildered and confused, waiting for the rising of the stars “to guide us on our dim and perilous way”. When we shall come out of this darkness and confusion, I cannot tell, but of this I feel convinced, far beyond the reach of doubt, that whenever that happy day comes, as come it will, it will have been heralded by a general awakening on the part of our parents, teachers, reformers, statesmen, to the supreme importance of placing the youth of the nation under intellectual and moral influences that shall help them to form correct and high opinions, and thus prepare the ground for their earnest and aspiring beliefs, which have always had a sovereign voice in determining the fortunes of mankind.

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\* cf. Matthew Arnold:—

And we are here as on a darkling plain,  
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night,

*Editor.*

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES (1894)

### I.—*Introductory.*

It is usual with a class of our Anglo-Indian critics to represent India as a stagnant pool of conservatism, only with some ripples and bubbles here and there upon its surface, caused by some passing gusts of public opinion. The social and political activity of the people is looked upon as superficial, and is attributed to what they are pleased to call "the microscopic minority" of the educated Indians. One need not quarrel with those who hold this opinion, and yet one may be permitted to remark that the little leaven, if it is destined one day to leaven the whole lump, is not to be lightly treated, and that even now it is becoming clearer and clearer every moment that the India of to-day is not the India of yesterday. Education is still very backward and the political training of the people very incomplete. In religious and social matters superstition still reigns supreme, and the age of reason is not yet come. But the spirit of change is abroad, and its tendencies may be marked in almost every sphere of human activity. We may or may not like these tendencies but to a seeing eye they clearly show in what direction India is drifting. The intellect of Europe is beginning to mould the intellect of India, its morals are infecting our morals, its political institutions have begun to be transplanted here with every likelihood of becoming adapted to the new environments. He was a bold man who said "the East is East, and the West is West, and never the two shall meet." The transformation of Indian ideas and institutions under the influence of English civilization is simply marvellous, and there is some admission of this fact even in the reproach so often hurled at the educated classes by the Anglo-Indian critics, that they have become too much anglicised in their ways and manners, and have consequently lost touch with their society.

It is, indeed, true that those who have caught the infection of western thought form a very small proportion of the entire population, but it can scarcely be doubted that if there is any vitality in civilization, then they are the chief progressive element of Indian Society. We, who are living in an age of transition, can hardly form a correct estimate of the diverse currents of thought and change which are so rapidly transforming the features of our mental and moral landscapes; and yet upon an approximately correct comprehension of the significance of this transformation, depend in the main, if not altogether, our chances of piloting safely the ship of State into the harbour of safe and durable progress by avoiding the Scylla of rash radicalism on the one hand, and the Charybdis of stolid conservatism on the other. It may, therefore, be interesting and even instinctive to trace the tendencies of this transformation—one may even call it revolution—in the spheres of Government, education, morals, and religion; and in this essay an attempt has been made to formulate and bring to a focus certain problems, the discussion of which by minds competent to handle them—not in the slipshod style of the newspaper press, but in a grave and reflective spirit—is, in my opinion, the first indispensable step to the arriving at a satisfactory solution of any, or, all of them. I shall take up politics first, because the most effective medium, as it would appear in the following pages, through which European civilization has affected us is the English Government. Under the head of political changes, I shall try to notice as briefly and concisely as possible, some of the marked changes which are taking place in the political opinion of the people, and the serious bearing they have both upon our own national character and institutions, and upon the principles which ought to guide the course of British policy in this country.

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II.—*Political Changes.*

There are three things which are the peculiar gifts of England to India—peace, liberty, and equality. India was never so peaceful as it is under the British rule, the complete liberty of thought and discussion it now enjoys is a unique phenomenon in its history, and the idea of political equality, although as yet a mere chimera in our practical dealings with our Anglo-Indian rulers, is yet conceded to us in theory as a matter of right. It may be interesting to notice what influence these features of the present Government have exerted upon our national life and character.

In any country the establishment of peace in the place of lawlessness and anarchy would produce serious social and political changes. There are circumstances which make these changes peculiarly interesting in India. The mere fact of contending tribes and clans coming under the supremacy of a superior power, is in itself a nationalising process. But when the superior power is able to maintain peace, the basis of a network of economic relations knitting together the scattered portions of the country is laid, and through the unity of commercial interest the first pulsations of national life begin to make themselves felt beneath the seeming diversities of race and religion. When wars cease, and the security of life and property makes the transferability of capital from place to place possible, trade springs up, and with trade those notions of International Law which lie at the root of international morality. The mutual hostilities of sects are softened down, racial prejudices, the result of ignorance, melt away, and when the idea of political and commercial unity comes to be clearly realised, the sentiment of patriotism is formed and the first symptoms of national life commence. Such has been the case in India under the *Pax Britannica*,



which besides awakening in us a distinct political consciousness, has exerted a most wholesome influence upon our intellect.

The first condition of thought is leisure which in all civilized countries is secured by peace. Under a militant *regime*, men's time and energies are expended in fight, and thus the intellect is stunted and withered. After centuries of militancy, the industrial regime has set in India, and men have the leisure and the energy to apply to speculation. In the long run, peace is sure to quicken our intellectual activity, and if we had no proportionate progress in this respect during the fifty years of perfect peace we have enjoyed, it is due to certain tangible causes which will be described hereafter.

In one respect, indeed, peace has been a doubtful blessing. War has always been favourable to the development of heroic qualities, whatever may be its other injurious consequences. It kept alive that flame of patriotism in the breast of the Indians which a more active participation in national affairs does in democratic countries. In India peace has come, but no other sphere has been opened to us for the exercise of those heroic qualities without which there can be no true national greatness. The English in India occupy a position which is inconsistent with any marked development of the patriotic sentiment in the people. They want to govern India without identifying themselves with the subject race. This form of Government, whatever name we may give it, is military despotism—and that too of a foreign nation—and it is, therefore, bound to lay the foundations of its power in our own national weakness and division.\* The Anglo-Indian Government has realised this fact, and has taken every pains to discourage in us the growth of any

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\* See Strachey's India.

powerful patriotic sentiment. With this object all those spheres of political activity which would be favourable to the display of heroic qualities and the development of national enthusiasm, are closed to us, and thus war, the great tonic of character in less advanced societies, having ceased, and no other corrective of the softening, even, emasculating influence of peace having been supplied, in the shape of an active share in the administration of the country, the moral fibre of the nation has suffered; and the injury thus caused will, I venture to think, come to be more acutely felt when the generation that has seen war, or retains the traditions of war, has passed away from the public stage.

Peace has made civil liberty possible in India; civil liberty of which our free press is perhaps the best and most unmistakable expression. But we must not forget that this liberty has come to us as a free voluntary gift of England, without our having done anything to deserve it, and this may account for our inability to realise the greatness of the gift. In England when Freedom's battle once began, it was bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,\* and it was not till generations of martyrs had shed their blood, that the liberty of thought and speech became an established fact. The English have won their liberty after many hard fights, and so they prize it; it, to us it has come without effort, without struggle, and as a matter of course, and we, therefore, do not properly appreciate its worth. Nevertheless, civil liberty such as we possess is a unique and remarkable experiment in the history of Asia. There is nothing in our past records which can enable us to gauge its influence upon the future of our national life, and it becomes, therefore, all the more necessary, that we should watch its operations in this country with the utmost caution and circumspection. For my part, I believe that, on the whole, liberty is a good to India, that we have

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\* Byron.—*Editor.*

reached a crisis—political and social—to pass through which safely and successfully, it is one of the most potent influences which we must resort to for our guidance and assistance.

One of the best fruits of Liberty is the remarkable literary activity of Modern India. In the pre-English India there were literary geniuses—poets, prose writers, historians—but there was not a *literate* people. Literature was the luxury of the favoured few, and was under the influence of what Buckle has called ‘the protective spirit.’ In other words, literary men wrote for the Court, and, therefore, there is so little in their works which breathes the spirit of common humanity or in which there are even the faintest suggestions of difference from the prevailing fashion in thought and conduct. Under the English Government this feature has disappeared. It has disappeared so suddenly and completely that the rising generation can hardly believe that it had ever existed. The introduction of popular education was the most important measure for the concession of liberty; for an educated people was sure to have a free press, sooner or later. Popular education created both the appetite and the food for a free press, and those whom it taught to think, it also taught to carry on a free trade of intellectual commodities among themselves. The literature of Bengal, so rich and various, owes its birth to this cause, so does the Hindi literature which bears the indelible impress of the master-mind of Swami Daya Nand; so also the Urdu literature, which in some important respects has received its inspiration from Sir Syed Ahmad, but which for its diffusion and popularity is indebted in a measure to the business enterprise of Munshi Newal Kishore,\* and the brilliant literary genius of Pandit Rattan Nath Dar whose “Fisani-Azad”

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\* This press, now occupying, an extensive area at Hazratganj (Lucknow), has thoroughly renovated its machinery under the direct supervision of the present proprietor, Munshi Bishan Narain Bhargava and is sending out books even to distant parts of Europe.—*Editor.*

is a monumental work, and marks an epoch in the Urdu tongue.\* But we must bear in mind that all this outburst of literary activity would have been impossible without a free press and a system of popular education. Our modern vernacular literature is very defective; its inspiration is very low, and altogether it is much inferior in artistic perfection and in originality to the literature of the Mohamdan *regime*; but it is more diverse and various, more practical, more human, and therefore more interesting and stirring. Large masses of men can enjoy it and take interest in it, and therefore its influence upon our national character is greater and more widely-diffused than was that of the literature of fifty years ago. With all its defects it is a most wholesome instrument of popular instruction. Religion, politics, morality, social customs—everything which engages men's hopes and fears, everything which delights, interests, instructs—are written about, freely discussed, and passed on in an intelligible and attractive shape to the masses. If ridicule be the herald of revolution, our Vernacular literature presents such a ridiculous picture of our society, and makes even the least instructed so familiar with all sorts of disturbing notions and beliefs, that it is bound to play a prominent part in the coming fortunes of this country. Those who are under the pleasant delusion that India is safe from political revolutions because the small minority of the educated classes is not in touch with the bulk of the population, must bear in mind that the radical views of the educated are gradually filtering down to the lowest strata of the nation through the innocent medium of vernacular literature. There is more of the revolutionary spirit in our vernacular novels and fugitive political or social tracts than in all the reports of the National Congress put together. I, therefore, look upon our modern vernacular literature as an instrument of reform. Into the conservative masses of men it has in-

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\* See part I.—*Editor*.

introduced the ferment of change, and the streams of articles, tracts, books upon religion, pouring forth from the daily press, shows how deep has the influence of liberty sunk into the national mind of India. Our vernacular literature has many and serious faults, most of which as I shall show later on are the product of an intense political spirit—but its one great redeeming feature, which at the present stage of our progress, atones for most of its evils, is, that it is the one agency which is preparing the popular mind for the appreciation, and, in course of time, the reception of ideas which are at present the exclusive property of the cultivated class.

But there is one aspect of our civil liberty which it is not altogether pleasant to contemplate. Party is perhaps a necessary accompaniment of modern political institutions; and in India it is clearly visible in the antagonism of interests which exists between the Government and the people. There are only two parties in this country worth speaking of—that which supports the Anglo-Indian despotism, and that which is opposed to it. The Government party is composed mainly of Anglo-Indians, official and non-official—to which is opposed the entire intelligence of the nation of which the Native\* Press and the National Congress are the best embodiment. Now this unanimity of political opinion among the educated, whatever may be its advantages in some respects, is extremely injurious to the spirit of true liberty and the individuality of character, inasmuch as it makes all political discussion one-sided, and does away with all chances of differences and discussions among the people themselves which are so useful in hardening the moral fibre by accustoming men to stand by their convictions against the wishes of those most dear and near to them. Every body can write against the official, because it has become a fashion; but few and far between

\* Throughout these essays the word is used as antonym to "foreign".

are the occasions when our political writers criticise any one of themselves with anything like the same freedom. The whole Native Press writes in one strain upon the burning questions of the day; and the harmony of political views which prevails among our political leaders is simply remarkable. Indeed, those subjects which are likely to arouse any dissension are assiduously suppressed and only those are discussed upon which all are agreed. This may be a necessity of our present political position; but nevertheless, it is fatal to independent and honest thinking. For the purpose of party organisation, politicians are reticent upon social questions with regard to which opinions differ, and thus social reform is left to take care of itself, because it is not found compatible with political agitation. But, honest and independent thinking is a matter of habit, and if the mind gets accustomed to think along one common groove upon politics, it carries same habit when directed into other channels. There is no courage required to think in a crowd and to say things which every body would applaud; but the feeling of independence is nursed only in conflict and warfare—when the thinker has to express opinions which jar with the popular sentiment, and adopt principles which separate him from his best friends. I do not know how a political discussion which is so monotonous and one-sided as ours is, can contribute largely to the expansion of the national mind; and, in this sense, therefore, it seems to me that an excessive regard for party, unless it is counter-balanced by any other emancipating influence is an evil which demands a corrective.

Liberty goes hand in hand with equality. If a people becomes free it does not long bear the arbitrary distinctions of privilege and prescription. In a caste-ridden country like India social and political equality is a novel phenomenon. People can hardly understand it, and are extremely dissatisfied with the Government which has forced it upon

them. In the India of a hundred years ago, and in the feudatory States even up to the present day, hereditary *status* and not personal merit is the chief regulator of men's position in society. We, who have imbibed Western ideas, may, like Tennyson's gardener Adam and his wife, 'smile at the claims of long descent,' but the Indian society ever since it first emerged from the dim twilight of its mythic past, has been governed by the doctrine of birth, and we all know how deep is the mark which caste system has impressed upon its structure. Upon the constitution of this society, the doctrine of equality is beginning to act as a most powerful solvent, and it may be interesting to glance at one or two media through which it operates.

The equality of law is in this country the first step to equality in other spheres. A great change is inaugurated in men's feelings when an agency is set up before which the rich and the poor, the patricians and the plebeians stand on a common ground. The masses gain something in self-respect and the dignity of manhood; and the classes lose something of the arrogance of birth and privilege. The Courts of justice which the English have established in India are such an agency. There was, doubtless, civil and criminal justice in former times too; but it was based upon the inherent distinctions of wealth and power. The Brahman was by law privileged to commit certain offences with impunity. The Zamindar was not responsible for many crimes against his tenants. In most things, the wife had no redress against her husband. All this has changed now, and the administration of civil and criminal justice—very defective and troublesome in many respects, but supremely impartial and inflexible between Indian and Indian—(would that it were the same between Indian and Englishmen!)—is, for the first time, beginning to teach the Indians through the medium of equal laws, the doctrine of Social equality. The Penal Code makes no distinction bet-

ween the Brahman and the Sudra; and every evicted tenant has his remedy against his landlord. The arrogance of privilege is bound to diminish with the legal elevation of the masses; and those who once become accustomed to rub shoulders with their betters in the courts of law, are not likely to tolerate long other social inequalities.

But the most powerful agencies for the diffusion of the idea of equality among the masses seem to me to be our public Schools and Colleges. Apart from the teachings they impart, they have an atmosphere about them in which the sentiment of class arrogance and exclusiveness is bound to wither. Sons of the rich and the poor, of noblemen and plebeians, of men of high caste and those of low caste, sit and work together in a class-room. The teaching is the same for all of them, the discipline is the same, the same standard of merit and censure, the same routine of work. The son of a nobleman, whatever may be the experiences of his home-life, finds that in a School-room there is no difference between him and the rest of his class-fellows whatever may be their position in society. On the contrary, a boy of the meanest birth finds that he can associate on terms of perfect equality with the most blue-blooded of his class-fellows. Not only this, but they also see that the chances of success in the class depend not upon birth but upon hard work, not upon any inherent distinctions of class and class but upon such distinctions as spring up between a cultivated and an uncultivated intelligence. There is another cognate consideration which may be briefly adverted to here. There is no doubt that most of our social distinctions have originated from real, mental and moral differences among the various orders of society. For instance, if the Brahmanical caste is the highest, it is because for centuries and centuries it has been the most cultivated of all castes. Knowledge and wealth have always been the two main sources of political power, and, owing to the constitution



of primitive civilization, this power having become the hereditary possession of one or two classes, these classes have come to be looked upon by the rest of their society as their superiors. Public schools, by giving instruction to the masses and the classes alike, are making knowledge which has hitherto been the special monopoly of one, the common property of both; and along with the diffusion of knowledge among the masses, the political power is also passing down to them from the aristocratic families of the land. When intellectual equality is once established, and when political equality grows up along side of it, social equality will not be long in following upon its track as a necessary consequence. It is in this sense that, to use Buckle's words, "the hall of Science is the Temple of democracy."

The spread of the feeling of equality among the people has its good as well as its evil side. It is injurious to the aristocratic sentiment which has reigned so long in this country and which is the root of many of our wants as a nation. The decay of aristocracy means the decay of political leadership and the decomposition of existing political groups, at a time when no new political leaders have appeared, but when political organization has become most necessary. Those who are our rulers by birth, and who command the traditional respect and confidence of the people are gradually losing their political ascendancy before the advancing tide of democracy; while those who incarnate the democratic movement and are filled with the first fervour of the leveling spirit, have not yet acquired any very powerful hold upon the masses and can not organize the forces of society for any political purpose as some of our hereditary chiefs can.

But, if the sentiment of equality has loosened the cohesiveness of our political groups and weakened their powers of co-operation, by freeing them from the ascen-

dency of the hereditary chief, it has been certainly favourable to the patriotic sentiment, inasmuch as it has opened to every-body all avenues of honour and fame, and has created in the mind of the humblest citizen a genuine interest in the affairs of his country, by supplying him with the spur of the most powerful motives to identify that interest with the loftiest ideals of his life.

These are a few of the phases in which I have tried to present the influences of the doctrines of liberty and equality upon the Indian people; in the following sections of this chapter I propose to show as to how they affect the Government.

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## II.

Lord Lansdowne never made a truer observation than when he said that of late one of the most prominent features of the people has become their habit of criticising freely the acts of authority, be it the authority of a Viceroy or that of a District Officer. It is true that political criticism has become much freer and bolder now than it was ever before. A free Press is a new thing in India, and considering its intellectual poverty, compared with the European Press, it has discharged its functions with remarkable ability and credit, and even when it becomes violent and vituperative in its tone by the provocations of the Anglo-Indian organs, it ought, like Olive, to be surprised at its own moderation. Maligned by its enemies, and only half-heartedly defended by its friends, the Indian Press is the most powerful instrument of political instruction for the Indian masses, and the growing habit of free political criticism among the people, which Lord Lansdowne deplored, is perhaps the best fruit of its earnest and thankless endeavours.

One of the most prominent features of the Native Press is, I must confess, its opposition to the Anglo-Indian domination. This is a serious evil, as no Government can hope to live long without the support of public opinion. This opposition is explained in various ways. From the official point of view the Press is the voice of the native agitator who preaches sedition for the sake of his own loaves and fishes, but whose teachings and preachings carry little weight with the people at large. From the non-official point of view it is the medium through which the voice of the instructed portion of the community is heard, and its hostile attitude, therefore, shows that the intelligence of the country is opposed to the ruling power. Here, as elsewhere, the Press is more or less a trading concern, and it is a very superficial view of human nature to suppose that the newspapers would go on saying any thing day and night which was not to the taste of and in harmony with the feelings of their readers. If anti-Anglo-Indian papers sell in the market, the plain reason is that the people like to read something against the Anglo-Indian. The Vernacular papers are even more reckless in their tone and more widely read than the English, and the class of people whose feelings and opinions they mould is the one which is not particularly partial to British rule, and is, on account of its mental backwardness, incapable of appreciating its manifold advantages to the country. It is, therefore, a poor consolation to our Anglo-Indian masters that if the Native Press is "seditious," its influence is confined only to the up per crust of the Indian society.

The upper crust—the educated class—is always the most powerful in every civilized society, and if the Native Press is the expression of its voice, then it represents a force which is bound to modify and transform, in course of time, the sentiments of the lowest strata of the nation. It may be that the political sympathy between the educa-

ted classes and the uneducated masses is yet very incomplete, that the latter do not care for a good many things after which the former yearn and hanker, and that not being able to look at their position from the standpoint of the educated classes, the masses cannot feel the same dissatisfaction with their present political lot which the former do, and that, therefore, they can hardly be expected to cherish any feelings of hostility and disaffection towards the Government. This may or may not be true, but it is certainly a very short-sighted statesmanship which resorts to the ignorance of one section of the people as a fortress of refuge against the intelligence of another. You may play off one against the other, but only for a time. Knowledge conquers ignorance at last, the intelligent infect the unintelligent with their views, and then the so-called fortress of refuge falls down like a house of cards and the results for the Government are disastrous.

The question why the attitude of the Native Press is what it is, is a serious question both for the people and the Government. To say that it is the work of the Native agitator does not explain the difficulty. What is there in the political atmosphere of India which is so favourable to the growth of the agitator-class? Why do people read papers with the contents of which they are not supposed to sympathise? What is the secret of what General Chesney calls "the free masonry of the Native Press"? Why is it that what one paper writes is generally echoed and re-echoed in almost all the papers throughout the length and breadth of India? What is the secret of this current of electric sympathy of political aims and ideas which is at once sent from one end of the country to the other? The fact of the matter is that all classes of Indians feel equally and alike that they are in the face of a common opponent. The galling yoke of official domination is riveted as tightly

round the neck of a Madrasi or a Bombay man, as round that of a Bengali. The political grievances of one Presidency are very much like those of the other. The Punjabi may be very different from the Bengali in nationality, in temper and character, but the brand of Anglo-Indian despotism is as clearly marked upon the forehead of the one as it is upon that of the other, and the common misfortune of political serfdom is a sufficient bond of sympathy between the two. The Sikh whose beard is cut or shaved by orders of a Civilian in the Punjab will naturally sympathise with the Bengali clerk, who is assaulted by another Civilian in Bengal. And this is the secret of the freemasonry, which is supposed to exist in the Native Press. Our political wants and grievances are the same all over the country, the battles we have to fight upon the road of political agitation are the same, and hence it is that what is written in Lucknow has practical bearing upon the conditions of things in Calcutta, and that the complaints of the Madrasi find an echo in the hearts of the people of the Punjab. Thus then the community of thoughts and sentiments existing upon political subjects, underneath the diversity of race and religious differences, though a wonderful, is yet an explicable phenomenon.

It is, however, a significant fact that the only public opinion which exists in the country should reflect nothing but the unpopularity of the Government with the people. The only class of people who appreciate its good points are the English educated. But their sympathies the Anglo-Indian official has alienated by his insatiable lust of power. The uneducated do not understand the principles of British rule and they can, therefore, have hardly any genuine affection for it. But a Government can exist no more without the hearty allegiance of its subjects, than a pyramid can stand upon its apex. And the Press is doing much to organise the forces which lie at the root of this

unpopularity. The isolated individual feels encouraged when he finds that his opinions are shared by others in various parts of the country. Thus all the discontented and aggrieved men in the country can intellectually fraternise together and form themselves into a brotherhood moved by common wants and interested in common endeavours.

The organisation of the scattered forces of society has given an amount of boldness and freedom to public opinion which is certainly remarkable. It is true that no other Government on the face of the earth would tolerate this for a moment; but it is also true that if the Anglo-Indian Government did not show this tolerance it would find its work extremely difficult in this country. Secret plots, conspiracies, and ever recurring rebellions would mark the course of its history, and it is by no means certain that the final result of the trouble would be all to its advantage.

India can be governed by a foreign nation only in two ways. If despotically, then as the Mohamedans governed it by settling down in the country, identifying themselves with the people, levelling down for all political purposes distinctions of race and religion, and availing themselves to the fullest extent of the indigenous talent for the service of the country; if upon liberal principles of modern democracy, then as the English govern the Colonies, by extending to them the equality of laws and political privileges, by giving a controlling and regulating influence to the national voice in the councils of Government, and by leaving as far as possible the management of their affairs in the people's own hands. No third plan of governing an alien dependency has yet been tried with any degree of success. It is evident that the Mohamedan policy has had its day and no body prays for its revival. It was a most effective system in its time, and if it did not allow freedom of the Press, it

at any rate associated itself so closely with the people of the country in the various departments of politics, that its actions were every moment amenable to correction by the real Public Opinion of the country. The English Government is, on the other hand, a Government of foreigners who do not live in the country, and who for obvious reasons stand in very great need of being guided to right courses by the Native Public Opinion. It is a despotism which wears the mask of constitutionalism, and, therefore, both for the honour of the mask, and because of its exclusiveness it is obliged to consult Public Opinion, and with this object the freedom of the Press has been conceded to us. While other sources of correct information upon Indian matters are closed to it (and for this its own aloofness is responsible) a free Press is a matter of extreme importance. To govern a people it must know their minds and dispositions, and the Press tell it what these are. Hence it is a matter of the gravest import that the Native Press should be so hostile to it. If this one support of public opinion fails, what other support has the Government got in this country? It is unpopular with the Press, which means it is unpopular with the thinking portion of the Indian public, and the views of these are permeating the mind of the unthinking portion also. It is a sign of the times, which those who run may read, and yet the meaning of which the Anglo-Indian official has not yet been able fully to grasp. The following passage from Burke contains a sound advice to those who have ears to hear, and with that I conclude the present article.

"I have nothing to do here with the abstract value of the voice of the people. But as long as reputation, the most precious possession of every individual, and as long as opinion, the great support of the State, depend entirely upon that voice it can never be considered as a thing of little consequence either to individual or to Government. Nations are not primarily ruled by laws; less by violence. Nations are govern-

ed by the same methods and on the same principles, by which an individual without authority is often able to govern those who are his equals or his superiors ; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it. The temper of the people among whom he presides ought, therefore, to be the first study of a statesman. And the knowledge of his temper it is by no means impossible for him to attain, if he has not an interest in being ignorant of what it is his duty to learn."

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### III.

A free press among a people who are dissatisfied with their Government is always a revolutionary agent. In India it is one of the chief causes of the growing unpopularity of British rule, because those who understand the faults and failings of the Anglo-Indian communicate them to those who understand them not, and thus, in a sense, it is true that but for the 'agitators' the masses would hardly be able to realise fully for some time at least, the miserable and pitiable lot to which they are condemned by an alien and unsympathetic Government. There are other causes at work which are day by day filling up the cup of popular discontent and making the Anglo-Indian domination more and more odious in the eyes of the people. The chief among them is the idea of political equality, the idea that politically we are on a par with the English, that we are entitled to the same privileges as they, and that nothing short of injustice would question the assertion of this claim on our part.

The growth of this idea of equality in the Indian mind and the peculiar form it has assumed is not without interest to a political observer. It has come to us both as a theory and as a practice. The political literature of England the enormous influence of which upon Young India, Sir Henry Maine has noticed somewhere, is saturated with the ideas of political equality. The most popular authors with Indians



are those who have written most upon the doctrine of equality. It is impossible to read Mill and Spencer, Burke and Fox, Hallam and Macaulay, Gladstone and John Morley without being impressed with the basal principles of democracy which they teach. From our boyhood we have been nourished upon a purely republican diet. The Universities have taught us that all men are equal, that there is no real and natural distinction between the rulers and the ruled and that all political inequalities and class privileges are the relics and survivals of a barbarous age which has now passed away without return.

But besides the purely theoretical form in which we receive this idea of equality through the system of education which owes its existence to the wisdom and prescience of Lord Macaulay, it presents itself to our mind as a living working principle in the shape of the constitution by which we are governed. The supernatural origin of Government has been one of the universal beliefs of mankind. The king was "the Lord's anointed," and to question his authority was a rebellion against God. The doctrine of the divine right of kings was the chief strength of despotism, because when the affections of the people were not available for the purposes of Government, their fears were as a necessary alternative enlisted in its service. In India, perhaps more than everywhere else, the supernatural theory of Government has always been predominant. It is evident that if the ruler is believed to hold a commission from on high, his acts cannot be questioned, and his people can not claim any privilege against his will and pleasure. In a society where this belief exists, all political inequality is out of the question. England has long ago crossed this mental zone and "the divinity that doth hedge a king" has ceased to shed any perceptible halo round her royal throne. The English have established a Government in this country which like the Home Government has no mystic element in it, and is in form and substance a purely human

contrivance. It does not bear any peculiar sanctity in the eyes of the people to whom rather it is a very poor thing as compared with a Government claiming a supernatural origin. The people do not feel that they are separated from it by any impassable gulf, as they would in the case of a Government in which the ruler was something more than a man. There is no mysticism, no supernatural awe, no divinity hedging the Viceroy; everything is purely human with its powers defined and limited and, therefore, what is human may rightfully come within the range of human ambition, and the many may very properly claim to have a share in those privileges which are the special monopoly of the few. The impersonal character of Government robs it all the more of whatever fascination it might otherwise have for the popular imagination, and its *quasi*-popular constitution, its public debates and divisions have gone far to modify the old political convictions of the people, and to lay in their minds the germs of that sentiment of political equality which is the chief animating principle of modern Governments.

But while public instruction has a decidedly democratic tendency and the Government of the country wears a constitutional aspect, the temper which the class entrusted with its work brings into the various departments of the administration is anything but democratic, and is even hostile to those emancipating influences which England is exercising upon India. And this is the root of the intense bitterness and friction existing between the rulers and the ruled, the main cause, of the present discontent, the key-note of the unpopularity of British rule in this country. Under a despotic Government claiming a supernatural sanction for its authority, the people can not logically assert the doctrine of equality, and, as a matter of fact, they do not; but under a constitutional Government they learn to demand the equality of political privileges, and they feel it as a wrong and an injustice if their demand is not listened to. The Indian Government has

nothing supernatural about it, but while its outward framework is constitutional and popular, the inner spirit which guides and animates it is the spirit of despotism; hence all our troubles and misfortunes. The class which governs us is not the class which has given us the constitution. The authors of the constitution are the English people, and hence it is liberal, popular and in a degree democratic. But those who have to work it out here—those who have to administer its laws and give practical effect to its decrees—form a class of men who, by the traditions of the service to which they belong, by the bureaucratic training they receive at any early age by being cut off from the stream of liberal ideas and tendencies of their own country, before they have reached the threshold of manhood, have acquired a peculiar taste for despotism, and have come to cherish a hearty dread and dislike towards those political aims and aspirations which the influence of British democracy has engendered in the Indian mind.

The present political situation in the country is this. Our education teaches us equality; our rulers say that we cannot have it. The principles of the constitution are democratic, but those, who are its guardians are bent upon dealing despotically with us. The soundness of these principles is not denied by the Anglo-Indian, but when the time comes to put them to practice, then all sorts of make-shifts are adopted, and mental sophistry and casuistry resorted to in order to evade their effect, with the result that the integrity of his motives comes to be suspected, all confidence in his public professions is lost, and all those passions are excited and inflamed in the nation which it is the duty of wise statesmanship to allay and extinguish.

The history of the Roman Empire offers a most instructive analogy upon the subject. Like the English, the Romans were an Imperial race; like them they were

saturated with intense political spirit. Patriotism was as prominent among them as it is among the English, and like the English they were extremely jealous of their political privileges. *Civis Romanus Sum* (I am a Roman citizen) is a famous saying reflecting in all their intensity and vigour, the Imperial pride and the patriotic sentiment of the Roman race. This ancient race founded a great empire, and built up a political constitution which has left an indelible mark upon the political history of Europe. Experience soon taught it that it was impossible to hold and govern a great Empire upon the bare principles of military conquest; and it soon extended the rights of Roman citizenship to a considerable portion of its subject people. And the rights thus conceded were not mere shams and delusions, like those which have been extended to us by the Great Proclamation, but were real, tangible concessions; and the result was that the members of the various nationalities brought under the authority of Rome ceased to be called by their respective names, lost their individual features, and became part and parcel of the Roman nation. Among those at least who were brought within the pale of Roman citizenship all distinctions between the conqueror and the conquered disappeared, and the Turk or the Greek or the Italian, or the Teuton could say with just and true pride, *Civis Romanus Sum*.

The English have built up even a more extensive Empire than the Roman ever did, but they have just missed the one great secret of Imperialism, which the Romans had discovered for themselves, and which was the one thing that fused the heterogeneous elements of various nationalities into one homogeneous whole. The Indian Empire is a mighty monument of British valour, and enterprise, and resource; but it can hardly be said to form any organic portion of the mighty fabric of British possessions, so long

as the distinctions of conquest are allowed to remain, and a sharp gulf of political differences divides the ruling class from the ruled. But it seems that for many a year to come, we are fated to have a system animated by the spirit of Roman Imperialism, without its redeeming features—namely the pride of the citizenship of a great Empire with which it inspired the most backward people as soon as they came under its sway; and it may, therefore, be stated that so long as *Civis Romanus Sum* is the peculiar and exclusive boast of the ruling caste in this country, the English people will sorely need the example of Rome to teach them the art of governing numerous and alien races.\*

But it must be obvious to the most superficial observer that 150 years of British rule in this country, have failed to forge any bonds of genuine sympathy and fellowship between the rulers and the people. And this is saying a great deal. What is the good of having a civilized Government, if the people do not see that it is better than an uncivilized Government? All statesmanship is vain and futile if it fails in the primary object of making itself acceptable to its subjects. The Anglo-Indian Government has failed to establish its Empire upon the hearts of the Indian people, because all the generous instincts of universal humanity have died out of its aggressive Imperialism. No nation however degenerate it may become ever likes to be conquered by another nation, and wise rulers have always, whenever they conquered any country, made it the first object of their policy to remove the sting of humiliation from the people's minds by treating them with kindness and consideration and by making some reparation to them for the loss, which the change of Government may have entailed. We are not so ungrateful as to deny the manifold blessings we enjoy under the present rule—blessings which no other Government past or present could have conferred upon

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\* Lord Bryce's essay may be read with advantage—*Editor*.

us—blessings which are England's chief title to the reverence and affection of the remotest posterity. But there is one dark spot which mars the effect of the whole picture. The class which governs us—the Anglo-Indian class—has hitherto shown a remarkable stubbornness in resisting all those influences which tend to bring together the two races—to narrow the gulf of social differences—to hasten the process of the union of hearts between the people of this country and the people of England. One does not like to be hard upon people who suffer from the defects of their qualities. But there is not the slightest doubt that an intense patriotism and an unmitigated Imperial instinct are at the bottom of that political inequality which the ruling caste has for the present built up as impassable barrier between itself and the subject-people, and which manifests itself not only in the political sphere but even in purely social and non-political matters. Indeed if any thing is most conspicuous in the present Government—anything which is in season and out of season thrust upon the attention of the people—it is the idea that we are a conquered race and must not presume to lay our profane hands upon the sacred ark of political power which belongs exclusively to our masters.

In whatever direction we may look, the spirit of inequality stares us in the face. There is no equality of laws between the rulers and the ruled. What is sauce for the Indian goose is not sauce for the Anglo-Indian gander. The Ilbert Bill agitation is an irrefutable evidence of the desire of the Anglo-Indian to have one system of laws for himself and another for us. Englishmen shoot down natives like partridges—are tried—and the farce of trials ends in acquittals. An Englishman has in almost all serious criminal cases the advantage of trial by jury; and English juries in India look upon it as part of their patriotic duty to pass a verdict of “not guilty” whenever the victim happens to be

a native. Anglo-Indians have a very happy knack of kicking to death natives suffering from enlarged spleens. Cases of murders of poor coolies committed by Anglo-Indians happen by dozens every year but nobody hears of them, and even those which go to Court, generally end in the most desirable way possible through the kindness of the Civil Surgeon. To assault native gentlemen travelling in Railway trains is nothing to Anglo-Indians and not many Dy. Collectors and Tahsildars will be found who have not had some experience of the rough and straight-forward manners of a Britisher in the form of violent abuse. In the public services there is inequality for which the Anglo-Indian alone is not to blame. It is true that he is the most interested party, but there must be something wrong at the fountain head to explain the impurity of the stream of British justice as it flows in this country. India has had many tyrants and many bad Governors. But none of them ever did deprive us by law of political equality, whatever may have been his practical dealings with us. For the first time in the history of India we have the good fortune of coming under the authority of a people who tell us plainly and openly that we must not expect to get the higher posts in the services, that we must be contented with such crumbs as fall from the table of the Anglo-Indian to whom belong by right divine the best prizes of public life. While this is the political situation, in social relations the spirit of inequality is still more marked. Between the two races there is no social intercourse whatever. There are official visits and interviews, but nothing more. And the greatest sinner in this respect is without doubt the Anglo-Indian. He disdains to mix with the black native; he seems to have got an idea in his head that the best way to keep up his authority is perhaps by making that authority as odious in the sight of his subject people as possible. He is however mistaken, and the day of rude awakening from this dream may not be very distant.

The advance of education and the spread of Political thought have already awakened the best portion of the nation to the dignity of self-respect, and political disabilities are beginning to be felt as a stigma and a disgrace. The gulf of social differences between the two races is wider now than it was a generation back, because the younger race which is now coming to the front is imbued with the doctrine of equality and is in consequence unable to reconcile itself to a class of men who carry their domineering habits with them in every walk of life. The expanding genius of Young India refuses to be cribbed, cabined and confined within the iron cage of political serfdom which the selfishness of the dominant sect has built for it; it is beginning to rebel against a system marked with all sorts of arbitrary disabilities and disqualifications; the unpopularity of the Government is increasing more and more, and it seems that "the little rift within the lute" may grow yet wider day by day,\* and by destroying utterly whatever harmony of thoughts and sentiments there still exists between India and England, seal the fate of a great experiment in the civilization of mankind.

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### III.

#### *Mental, Moral, and Social Changes.*

In the foregoing pages an attempt was made to notice briefly one or two prominent features of the present political situation in this country. I now propose to discuss some of the most important changes which western civilization has introduced into our social order—changes as they are influencing our intellect, our morals, our social institutions, and our religious beliefs. The subject is very vast and comprehensive, and in the space which I have allotted to myself no more than a cursory handling of some of the salient points is possible.

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\* Tennyson—*Editor.*



Social changes are the sum of changes in men's intellect, character, and institutions. Let us mark then, first, the broad tendencies of modern Indian intellect as it has been influenced by the impact of European learning.

The education which we receive is different from that which the preceeding generation had received. It is also different from that education which all of us receive at home and which is so powerful in giving a bias to our thoughts and inclinations. The old order which the new has supplanted had at least this merit that in it there was no antagonism between education and home influences, the one was not a contradiction of the other. What the teacher, or the Mouvie or the Guru taught, was reflected in every day life of the people; the boy had no difficulty in reconciling his inner convictions with his outward social surroundings. There was harmony between the intellect and the feelings, which was reflected in the consistency of conduct and convictions. The new order in this respect presents a moral and mental chaos. What the Universities teach, the home contradicts, and the boy grows up with opinions which his early associations have done nothing to convert into real, living convictions. A single instance will show the force of these observations. The most marked feature of modern education is that it is critical and scientific. It encourages doubt and respects no authority unless it can stand the test of criticism. It explains the ordering of the physical universe upon natural grounds and has put supernaturalism out of court. The most elementary scientific training is enough to dispel most of those religious superstitions which form the warp and woof of popular religion. The basis of a great change is here laid as well as of considerable differences between the young man and his parents. But this is not all. He learns the doctrine of individual liberty which he finds—and if he is at all an intelligent and thinking youth—must find, jars with a family system in which the

*pater familias* is the autocratic ruler of the household. He learns the doctrine of the equality of the sexes, but within his household a different principle reigns supreme. His mental training imbues him with a deep and fervent love of change, but the household gods of his parents are custom and tradition. In almost every important respect he finds himself face to face with two antagonistic and incompatible systems, and both mould his character and opinions. The result of this dual system is inconsistency between the conduct and the conviction of the man who is brought up under it—the adoption of opinions which do not influence conduct, and the growth of conduct which is not balanced by any well-formed and consistent set of principles.

The inconsistency of thought and action which runs through the character of the young generation in India is due also to the suddenness and abruptness with which the change has come. A new world of ideas has flashed upon its mind, and it is dazzled with “the excess of light.” The knowledge which has been imparted rests as a foreign matter upon its mind; not enough time has yet elapsed for it to be assimilated and converted into an intellectual muscle. Opinions have been adopted without any idea of their proper place in the whole system of thought, and principles are professed, the full and exact bearing of which upon character is but dimly and faintly realized. The stream of new thought as it is pouring in upon the mind of the young generation is so rapid and so full that the discriminative faculty is benumbed and paralyzed and a blind and reckless adoption of all sorts of inconsistent and contradictory ideas is the result which is the secret of the intellectual anarchy that marks the New India.

While the conflict of home influences with School education and the suddenness and rapidity which with the flood-gates of western knowledge have been opened upon us, have made our thought inconsistent and unstable, the political

spirit—which also has come from the west and has permeated the most advanced section of the community—has made it superficial. Under the old *regime*, thought was fettered and, in the best intellects, was purely metaphysical and speculative. The questions which touched men's deepest interests—political and social questions—were placed beyond its pale by the despot and the priest. Political discussion was not heard of, and in a society in which religious freedom (as we know it now) did not exist, social problems closely mixed up with religion and custom could not be safely discussed. It was, therefore, inevitable that the Indian intellect should cease to be practical, bold and inquiring, and should exercise itself upon metaphysics and the like subjects of speculative thought. The freedom of the Press and the limited concession of political liberty have given a new tone and direction to the Indian mind. They have freed it from the fetters of arbitrary restraints and extended its jurisdiction over a variety of new and interesting subjects.

Matters which interest a man most deeply are those which affect his material concerns. In every age the number of those who devote themselves entirely to speculative philosophy is small, but it is much smaller in ages and among nations which are marked with an intense political spirit. Some thinkers lament the decay of higher thought in England under the ever increasing pressure of democratic influences, and think that the growth of periodical literature which satisfies the mental appetite of the English people who want to read things in a hurry, has affected most injuriously the production of works of any solid and permanent worth. In America the results of political spirit are most apparent. In the course of a century America has made a wonderful progress in various departments of human interest and activity. She has built up and perfected a constitution which is destined to be the model of future Governments. She has developed an enormous trade. She

has taken a foremost place in mechanical inventions. She has established a remarkable system of national education. She has raised the status of women to a height which has no parallel in ancient or modern history. But it is noteworthy that although the men who founded the race of modern Americans—"the pilgrim fathers"—were men equipped with the heroic virtues of Puritanism and the intellectual gifts which produced Milton, yet their descendants after a century of peace and progress have failed to produce one single man of real genius in the higher regions of thought and imagination. There is no American philosopher like Locke or Bacon, or Mill or Spencer; no naturalist like Darwin, no poet like Shakspeare or even like Wordsworth and Tennyson; no literary genius like Carlyle (great though the genius of Emerson was), no novelist like Scott and George Eliot. The absence of the highest forms of genius in art and letters and philosophy is due to the absorption of the best energies and faculties of the nation in the pursuit of political objects—in faction-fights, in election contests, and in that ceaseless and restless scramble for power which party Government invariably generates.

A closely analogous change is taking place in India too. The political spirit has made thought practical and quickened free discussion. For the educated there is an inducement for thinking because they can think upon subjects which are of living interest to them. The newspaper is an educating agency not only upon politics, but upon various other subjects as well, and has done much to raise the average level of popular intelligence. This is the good side of the change. Its evil side is presented to us in the superficiality which marks the thought of the foremost Indian thinkers—the intellectual *creme de la creme* of our society. And this is as it should be. Because in every nation the capital of mental energies is limited. If you

invest it in one concern, the other concerns must starve. In India the most active intellects have been drawn towards politics, and the result is the absence of all serious thought upon moral and religious subjects.

The diffusion of an intense political spirit has given a serious bias to our national intellect. The pursuit of thought for its own sake is not cared for, and if certain reforms are not ripe for political action, most of us think that they are absolved from the responsibility of having sound opinions about them. When men think of the consequences of an opinion, instead of its truth or falsity, speculative boldness and intellectual veracity must suffer. Yet without intellectual veracity, there can be no originality and without originality no genius. I strongly suspect that to this cause may in part be attributed that intellectual barrenness which characterises the present generation of Indians. Speculation loses much of its vigour and seriousness when it is subordinated to considerations of political expediency; and the atmosphere in which party passions rage and the checkmating of an adversary is considered more important than the ascertainment of truth, is not favourable to the growth and developement of thought which opens up new paths of research and makes lasting contributions to the stock of human knowledge. The excitement of party strife, for which we in India seem to be developing a new taste, is inconsistent with that philosophic calm and candour without which no profound thought can be pursued, and the literary bias which marks the young generation shows how deep the influence of the political spirit has gone.

In the modern political warfare, a fluent pen and a fluent tongue are among the most necessary equipments of a politician. The study of literature is, therefore, considered more important than that of science. The art of rhetoric both in writing and in speech must be acquired by every one who means to take part in the public life of this coun-

try. It is no wonder that men read Burke, Fox, Macaulay, and other popular orators and writers in preference to scientific authors. And a necessary consequence of this has been the present *over literary* education of the Indian people. Now this literary education is good as an instrument for the expression of our thought in impressive and graceful language, and as a culture of the imagination; but if it is not supplemented by a thorough scientific education which teaches us to deal with facts and the realities of life, it is apt to generate in the minds of its recipients that taste for sophistry and verbal jugglery which is concerned more with the manner of saying a thing than with the matter of what is said. In India the cultivation of pure literature is beset with peculiar dangers. "The fact is" as Sir Henry Maine aptly remarks that "the educated native mind requires hardening. The culture of the imagination, that tenderness for it, which may be necessary in the West, is out of place here; for this is a society in which for centuries upon centuries, the imagination has run riot, and much of the intellectual weakness and moral evils which afflict it to this moment, may be traced to imagination having so long usurped the place of reason." Now the study of the literature which has a fascination for men engaged or wishing to engage in politics, is saturated with partizan rhetoric, which, whatever may be its effects upon the feeling, exercises certainly most disastrous influences upon the reasoning powers of the Indians. The habit of relying upon authority and of deductive reasoning is strengthened, and false analogies which are no more than tricks of rhetoric are taken for exact and real likenesses in nature and vitiate the current of political thought.

And the mental biases thus formed by a literary education which the political spirit has supplied a powerful stimulus, may be traced in the ingenious theories which a good many of us hold with regard to our social and religious sys-

tems, particularly as to their origin and development in the past history of India. The attempt on the part of some of our public writers to harmonise the antique conceptions of India with the latest phases of modern thought, and the fertility of resource shown in detecting the most fanciful analogies between the most primitive religious and ethical notions of the early Aryans and the most brilliant speculative achievements of the Nineteenth Century, are the fruits of an education which has taught men tricks of rhetoric more than the facts of nature, the facility of expression more than a regard for the truth of what is expressed, which has cultivated the imagination without accustoming the intellect to those strict conditions of proof which science demands of its votaries, and which threatens to sharpen our dialectical weapons by blunting our faculty of origination in the field of social and physical science, both theoretical and applied—a state of things to which the barren speculative activity of Middleval Europe stimulated if not actually generated by a passionate study of the ancient classics offers a most instructive analogy.

It is not only that some of the highest subjects of speculation are left to take care of themselves, but even political thought has become superficial. Political events march far and fast. Those who can think upon them, have to think quickly, and with an eye to the expediciencies of the occasion. But quick thinking breeds superficiality, and opportunism brings timidity in its train. Deep thought requires leisure and detachment from the existing interests of the hour. To devote himself whole heartedly to the pursuit of an idea, to scorn delight and live laborious days for its sake, to concentrate all the faculties of his mind upon it, to be prepared to follow it whithersoever it may lead him—this is the mark of a real thinker, and it is this very mark, which is conspicuous by its absence in the character of our foremost men. Paretical politics afford them no leisure,

and they can hardly detach themselves from the hurry and bustle of the hour without retiring from public life altogether. Whatever may be the consequences of this change upon the political progress of the people, upon their mental progress; they are by no means an unmixed good. In so far as the political spirit has created an intelligent interest in the people's minds in their affairs and encouraged free criticism, it is a good which we can never dispense with; but in so far as it has, by absorbing the largest quantity of our national intellect in politics and by creating the habit of hasty thinking with an eye to its appropriateness to party considerations, made our thought timid and superficial, it is an evil, which unless it is rectified by a healthier system of education and by the growth of institutions which are the correctives of democracy, will distort and mutilate that national progress which is destined to grow with the growth and expand with the expansion of English civilization in India.

But while the influences received through education and political institutions have made the Indian intellect inconsistent, timorous, and shallow, they have sown in it the seeds of some ideas which lie at the root of modern civilization, and which if they are allowed to grow in this country will one day transform the whole complexion of Indian society. The most important of them is the idea of progress.

It is difficult to realize, and yet there is nothing more obvious in history than this that the idea of progress—the idea that there is evolution in human society from lower to higher stages—has been confined to a very small portion of the totality of the human race, past and present. The force of habit and the yoke of custom have everywhere retarded the reform of ideas and institutions, and made civilization stationary. Greece is the one exception to the general rule



and it is from Greece, as we are told by an English thinker, that the idea of progress has radiated and illumined the whole western world. Mr Bagehot in his thoughtful but curious book on "Physics and Politics" suggests the following explanation of this cardinal fact in European history.

"If fixity is an invariable ingredient in early civilization, how then did any civilization become unfixed? To this question history gives a very clear and very remarkable answer. It is that the change from the age of status to the age of choice was first made in states where the Government was to a great and a growing extent a Government by discussion.....A free State—a state with liberty—means a State, call it republic or call it monarchy, in which the sovereign power is divided between many persons, and in which there is a discussion among those persons. Of these the Greek Republics were the first in history, if not in time, and Athens was the greatest of those republics." A Government by discussion has been established in India too, and although as I have already noticed under the peculiar circumstances of the country it may have made thought superficial, yet there is no doubt that it has made it free and unfettered, and has inoculated it with the idea of progress which is the key note of modern civilization.

The ground has thus been cut from under the feet of our Conservatism, and the spell of tradition is broken. The most advanced section does not sigh for an unreturning past; its ideals are in the future. The belief in progress onwards and upwards and not backward or downward—the belief that we are but a link in the chain of human progression, that human nature is gifted with capabilities and possibilities only a few of which have yet been unfolded, that the march of civilization though slow, is yet steady and sure, the belief that change is the law of progress and that in the immortal words of the poet:

"Through the ages one increasing purpose runs,"

"And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns,"—this is the belief with which the English have inspired the Indian mind—the ardent faith in the living and ceaseless progress of humanity which is destined one day to emancipate, redeem, and regenerate one of the most capable sections of mankind. And the noble results which will in course of time be worked out by the Indian people under the inspiration of this mighty faith will survive every thing, which England has yet done or may hereafter do for India and will perish only with the human race.

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Be it or be not true that men are governed by their feelings and not by their ideas, this is most certainly true that a considerable change in the opinion never fails to bring about in course of time a corresponding change in the feelings of mankind. In the foregoing article the broad features of the deep and far-reaching intellectual change passing over our society were pointed out, and its good and evil tendencies were noticed. It remains to show how that change is influencing our morals. We have seen that owing to circumstances—some preventible by human effort, others natural and inevitable, a state of mental anarchy has overtaken the Indian Society which is reflected in the prevailing moral anarchy. Science has sapped the foundations of supernaturalism. The spirit of criticism has dispelled the charm of authority and tradition. The idea of progress, which sums up the leading traits of the change, has broken the cake of custom and introduced an element of decomposition into our social organism. Morals which have hitherto rested upon supernatural sanctions are losing those sanctions one by one, and no other purely human sanctions have grown up in their stead. There is a fretting against the old bonds, because

the feelings which have hitherto made them tolerable are gradually passing away. When custom is ceasing to be respected, when the authority of tradition is coming to be called in question, when the old ideals of hope and effort are fading away from the people's vision, when the retrospective habits of thought are giving place to an ardent faith in the glorious possibilities of a dim and distant future—when in short, the spirit of secularity is gradually freeing thought from the stifling embraces of supernaturalism, nothing can preserve its *statu quo* which has hitherto rested upon mystic and supernatural basis, the crumbling away of which must be followed by the crumbling away of the structure which they have so long supported. This crisis has come upon India, where the intellectual basis of character has been undermined by the tidal waves of the new change, and the whole fabric of our morality may one day disappear like a huge iceberg under the action of warmer currents of water at its bottom in the northern seas.

It may, however, be interesting to trace, in the light of the foregoing observations, a few of the striking features of the change which is taking place in the moral sentiments and habits of the Indian people.

Religious morality has always a tinge of asceticism about it. The feeling of other-worldiness which is the soul of religion casts a sombre shadow upon the most alluring prizes of this world, and has been one of the most powerful bulwarks against the inroads of luxury and profligacy in the most critical periods of the world's history. The Hindu religion is intensely ascetic, and the Hindu morality which rests upon that religion is, therefore, equally ascetic. Whatever may be the drawbacks to asceticism, there is no doubt that for many a year to come human society can not do without it. So long as the desires of the flesh are strong and unruly they will need its curb, and so long as the chief incentive to human action is the love of personal gain and

pleasure, the doctrine that the nobility of conduct consists in pursuing the good and the true for their own sakes, and even at the cost of personal ease and pleasure, can never grow out of date. The ancient Hindus had embodied the principle of asceticism—the principle of scorning all personal comforts and suffering pain for pain's sake—in their system of education, and whatever may have been its other short-comings, it was pre-eminently successful in developing the qualities of heroism and self-sacrifice in the race that have given India a high place in the history of mankind. The life of the Brahman was subject to a severe moral training from beginning to end. As a student he had to live away from home, to beg from door to door, to scorn delights and live laborious days, to wring knowledge from the hard hands of penury, to climb amid poverty and want the difficult heights of Parnassus, and to let no love of ease or pleasure distract or divert his mind from the pursuit of the highest knowledge then attainable. That system has passed away and the spiritual atmosphere which made it possible. Religious asceticism is certainly not a note of modern civilization, and you can no more revive it in India than you can make the blood run once again through the veins of an Egyptian mummy.

Nevertheless the evil of the decay of the ascetic element in modern education must be apparent to every body who thinks that heroism and self-sacrifice are as much needed now in human society as they have ever been. Our education is very easy and entails no hardship beyond that of cramming. The moral faculties are never called into exercise. The student is not conscious of being subject to any moral discipline. The teacher looks upon his pupil's morality as a secondary consideration altogether. The parents are unfit to look after the character of the boy. The boy is well-clad, well-fed and is allowed every indulgence in the

pursuit of pleasure. He is not taught to curb his desires; he is patted on the back if he never asserts his individuality, but allows himself to be guided in everything by his teacher or parents. The books which he reads repudiate all asceticism in ideas and in conduct, and place before his mind's eyes the fascinating pictures of modern European society marked with all the bright hues of luxury and refinement. Utilitarian philosophy teaches him that pleasure and pain are the lords of life, and Herbert Spencer tells him that in the sentient world pain and evil are convertible terms. The eclipse of religious belief has cast a deep shadow over the world beyond the grave, the scene of compensation for the ills of this life, and has thus imparted a fresh importance and value to such pleasures as he can obtain for himself within the short space of his earthly existence.

To these must be added the absence of all military drill from his education. War is an evil, but it is favourable to the growth of certain qualities without which no moral development can be complete. To be exposed to dangers, to be called upon from time to time to defend oneself or one's town or country at the risk of life, to be accustomed to pain and privation,—this, whatever may be said as regards its evil side, has a good side also, which we can hardly afford to ignore. With the English rule, has come peace, and with peace the cessation of all military activity in the country. The military career is practically closed to Indians, and in the absence of volunteering system we have no military drill.

These teachings and influences have unnerved our character, and dwarfed the possibilities of our moral growth. The present generation of Indians has become ease-loving, luxurious, and over-sensitive to the slightest touch of pain. The hardihood of the elder generation is gone, and a sort of moral effeminacy has crept over our national character.

Hence, so little self-sacrifice among us, so little heroism, so much dread of pain, so much hankering after the sordid pleasures of life. The spirit of enterprise and adventure is dead, because it requires for its companion the feeling of courage, the heroic disregard of personal ease and comfort.

This is a phase of our development the disastrous consequences of which it is impossible to exaggerate. Heroism and self-sacrifice are the salt of life. To a young nation they are an indispensable condition of existence. No nation ever became great which did not learn the virtue of self-mortification at any early age. To seek danger, to face difficulties manfully, to suffer pain and privation, to be prepared to cast to the wind the best prizes of life at the call of public duty, to cast self out of self, to despise ease and comfort, to follow right because it is right, in the scorn of consequence,\*—these are the marks of truly heroic characters, characters that appear from time to time upon the stage of history, and carry the race forward to higher stages of progress and loftier ideals of living. India must again produce such characters before it can gain its proper place among the nations of the world.

But for the present the influences of an epicurean morality upon our character are apparent. We avoid the very idea of pain, both physical and moral, and the result is that all reform whether in ideas or in institutions is a crusade against the existing order—a crusade against our own life-long habits, and against the life-long habits and beliefs of those most dear and near to us, and is, therefore, a painful enterprise: there are so few of us who have the moral courage to undertake it and to carry it to any successful termination. The charges of fickleness and hypocrisy against the younger generation are not, therefore, altogether groundless. Although it is true that its new ideas and beliefs are so very different from those of the old-fashioned

\* Tennyson's *Ugolino*—*Editor*.

people that it is obliged in the interest of sound progress itself to keep them for the time being concealed within its bosom, and to silently acquiesce in the existing order (which a rash radical might call hypocrisy, but which in reality is a very prudent social compromise) yet there is not the slightest doubt that in the majority of cases this compromise does degenerate into a servile adherence to beliefs and customs which education has taught us to despise and discard, and lays us justly open to the charge of hypocrisy—the charge of playing fast and loose with our convictions—of believing one thing and acting another, of deceiving ourselves and the public by trying to live in a fool's paradise of outward conformity and inward dissent. In the same way, although the inconstancy of principles with which we are charged is due in a measure to the fact that in the great sea of change which is seething and surging around us, all ideas and conceptions seem to be in a state of ferment and agitation, and the mind of Young India finds it hard in its utter confusion and bewilderment to anchor itself upon any set of principles, and is thus in a state of unstable equilibrium; yet on its moral side this fickleness of character is due to the fact that the moral fibre has lost that toughness which an unswerving adherence to principles involves, and that upon the faintest fear of trouble or obloquy or opposition we turn our coats and abjure our convictions. The young generation is fickle-minded and hypocritical, because it lacks the moral courage which boldness in conduct and opinion requires.

Individuality of character is at a discount, because it involves friction with the existing system, and is therefore injurious to one's personal peace and comfort. This, I look upon as a most serious evil, because in a country where conservatism is the governing principle of life, and where everything is given up to custom so that custom may be all in all, the spirit of non-conformity, in whatever form it may mani-

fest itself—the individuality of character, however crude and defective it may be, is the one thing needful. We have to deal with a perverse and stiff-necked generation wedded to a code of social dogmas from which all life has fled; and unless we are prepared to fight a hard fight, it will remain “like the air invulnerable,” and all our vain blows will be but “malicious mockery.” We must bear in mind that one of the greatest pains of which human nature is susceptible is the pain of a new idea, that by trying to impress our ideas upon others we are really subjecting them to keen mental suffering. They will stick to their ideas with all the passionate fervour of which they are capable, they will in order to escape their mental anguish try to turn the whole artillery of social prejudice against us. We cannot blame them for this; perhaps from their point of view they will be right. But if our own nerves are not strong enough to bear the shock of the snapping in twain of the ties of affection and friendship, if we are not prepared to sacrifice our personal pleasure upon the altar of public good, if we cannot brook ridicule and brave evil tongues for the cause of truth; if, in short, we have not got the individuality of character which refuses to be subdued by adverse circumstances, and which although it may be tried by adversity is yet never shaken by it, then the sooner we—the educated classes—who boast of being teachers and reformers, retire from the field of social reform the better. What is the use of assailing social prejudices if we are ready to surrender to them on the faintest shows of resistance? What is the good of resisting the wind, when we cannot ride the whirlwind and direct the storm?

But while the decay of the ascetic element in our training has led to the relaxation of our moral energy, and the decay of the heroic qualities in the national character, the sentiment of patriotism has come in its stead, which is purely European, and which, if properly fostered and nurtured,



may be expected to develop the same heroic virtues in this country as it has developed in other countries and in other times. Next to religion the greatest force which has moved mankind is patriotism, and we have seen that in Rome it was even raised to the dignity of a religion. The seed of this sentiment has been implanted in India by the English. Wars have ceased, peace has been established, and the facilities of travel and communication have come. These have enabled the various races inhabiting the country to know one another better and to correct their prejudices respecting one another. The unity of political aims and the gradual dissolution of the bonds of caste have given further stimulus to this nationalising process, and the decay of religious hopes and fears has thrown a peculiar halo of sanctity around the love of Fatherland. It is true that all this holds good of a very small section of the people only, but that is the most active and the most powerful element. Now the growth of this patriotic sentiment is a happy sign of the times, and argues well for the future of the country. It is the one thing which will supply the corrective to the sordid materialism of the age, which will present to men objects of laudable ambition, which will raise them above the rank and steaming valleys of selfish pursuits to the purer heights of national endeavour, which will develop the qualities of heroism and self-sacrifice, and will in the pursuit of purely secular aims, summon the moral energies of the nation with the trumpet call of ancient faith. But for the present it is very weak. Even among those in whom it is strongest, it has not yet been able to call forth zeal and effort equal to the occasion. An age of revolution without revolutionary characters is a singular phenomenon which we are witnessing in India. We are living in a stormy epoch; we want a stormy patriotism, a patriotism, independent and uncompromising, reckless of consequences and ready to do battle with every social ill. The cup of political evils is so full, the burden of social iniquities has become so intolerable,

and the tyranny of custom stands out so red and foul, that a militant uprising of the better spirit in men against them has become one of the essential conditions of national salvation. Genteel patriotism waiting patiently for the millenium when reforms will be worked with rose-water, is not wanted, but a self-reliant and zealous patriotism which mocks the calculations of the safe man of the world and leads the van of forlorn hopes. The day may come when "some divinely-gifted man," may "by breaking his birth's invidious bars," and "breasting the blows of circumstance," make himself

"the pillar of a people's hope

"And the centre of a world's desire," \*

but for the present even the first faint flushes of its happy dawn are yet hardly visible on the horizon of the most ardent faith.

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It has been remarked by Lord Bacon that a knowledge of the speculative opinions of the men between twenty and thirty years of age is the great source of political prophecy. If, then, the changes in the speculative opinions of the young generation of Indians upon social, political, and moral subjects have been correctly pointed out in the preceding articles, there should be little difficulty in forecasting the nature of corresponding changes which are sure to manifest themselves ere long in our social institutions. Indeed, the change has already commenced and its tendencies may be clearly marked and studied. I will notice the action of the new change upon caste, family system of Indian women, and close my observations upon the social aspect of the question.

First, to take the caste system. It is needless to remark that it is the most important social institution of India, one which makes its power felt in almost every department of our national activity. Broadly speaking there are two

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\* Tennyson's *In Memoriam*—Editor.

theories upon which it is defended--the religious theory, and the police theory. The first starts with the assumption that the different orders in society are of divine origin, and that they can never be amalgamated without resolving it into its primitive elements. The second takes a utilitarian view of the system and describes it as one of the most efficient guardians of social morality. With the religious theory I have nothing to do for the present, be its worth what it may. I am concerned with the other theory, which sets up caste as a sort of social police whose chief function is to see that men do not commit trespass upon forbidden grounds, or any burglary upon the moral cash boxes of the nation. There is some truth in this theory, and combined with the idea of the division of labour in primitive societies, may even offer a probable explanation of the origin of the system itself. But at the present time the man must be wanting either in honesty or in intelligence or in both, who still adheres to the police theory of caste, who still believes or persuades other people to believe that it is an efficient check upon immorality, and that on the whole it brings more good than evil to Indian society. I do not wish to conceal my belief upon this matter, and I must say once for all that I look upon caste as a pure and unmitigated evil. The assertion may sound harsh in some ears but I will explain it.

When we say that caste is a social police what do we mean? This, that it is the medium through which, or the form in which, the public opinion of our society acts upon its individual members? And what is the nature of this public opinion? In the first place most of its constituent elements have come down to us from an archaic past. In the second place, even those elements which are not quite so old, represent the biases and beliefs of the orthodox Hindu. In both these respects there is hardly anything in the social opinion inculcated by caste which can be conducive either to progress or to morality. I do not say that there

are not some among us for whom any check is better than none, but upon the best and most advanced portion of the nation the check exercised by caste can never fail to be degrading and demoralising. Reformers have to contend against difficulties everywhere, mankind all over the world have a dislike for innovation; but in India it is most difficult and dangerous to advocate reform or introduce novelty, because here the penalty which caste inflicts upon the reformer is ex-communication—a sort of civil death, in some cases perhaps more painful than the severest of physical agonies. The fear of ex-communication is the most effective barrier against all reforms in this country, and when one considers all the pains and sufferings which this penalty involves, one ceases to wonder at the hesitation and nervousness with which even the boldest amongst us venture to grapple with questions which are likely to excite any deep caste prejudices in the community.

A change has, however, commenced, and caste cannot long retain its ancient hold upon the national mind.\* It has lost its religious significance in the light of modern science and research. It will lose its moral significance also under the influence of the levelling doctrine of democracy. When men become politically equal they are not likely to submit to social inequality (of the sort established by caste), and intellectual equality (in the sense of the equality of opportunity offered to all for mental culture under the system of public instruction) is the last straw which will break the camel's back. The decline of caste will no doubt create confusion and disorder, but out of the chaos thus created there will as certainly arise a new and improved social order. Indeed, if national unity be the one thing which

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\* There are unmistakable signs of the levelling process as the movement for the uplift of the depressed classes is now one of the main planks of present-day reform—*Editor*.

India most needs, if it be true that the spirit of caste is not in harmony with the social and political ideals which we aspire to, if the course of civilization, is marked with the progress of man from the age of status to that of contract, if caste represents customs and beliefs which belonged to an antique civilization but which have now hardened into a shell the breaking of which is the first condition of progress, if it has weakened Indian society by dividing it into pieces, and thus been one of the causes which have made us an easy prey to every foreign invader, if the growth of a spirit of broad patriotism transcending all sectional lines and embracing all India, be a necessary equipment not only for our political but for our social regeneration, then considering the direction in which India is tending there is every reason to hope that the institution which has so long strangled our growth and paralysed our energies, has not a long lease of life before it, and that, in spite of all the efforts of its short-sighted and overzealous advocates, its present despotism will soon become a thing of the past.

Secondly, let us take our Family System. Family is the archetype of society—the matrix in which national character is moulded. *Patria Potestas*—the despotism of the patriarch—is the essence of the patriarchal system. It is, therefore incompatible with equality and individual liberty which are among the most dominant influences of modern civilization. That it has many good points can hardly be doubted by any one who knows anything about it. It is the school of reverence and affection, of gentleness and charity. It is favourable to self-sacrifice and to the development of capacity for bearing hardship and pain. In India it has filled and does even now fill, though on a decreasing scale, the place of public charity, by helping those who can not help themselves—by throwing the poor, the sick, the incapable upon the support of their fortunate and more capable relations. To live under the authority of parents

with brothers and sisters and even with distant relatives, to grow up in the teachings of obedience, respect, and love from one's boy-hood; to be taught from the beginning that one's pleasures and pains are indissolubly connected with the pleasures and pains of others, to learn to sympathise with the sick and sorrowful, help the needy, comfort the comfortless, minister to the wants of the orphan and the widow; to be called upon from time to time to perform what after all make up "the best portion of a good man's life,

"His little, nameless, unremembered acts

"Of kindness and of love"—\*

all this can never fail to be a most salutary school of moral discipline—a school eminently fitted to develop those qualities which are so favourable to domestic happiness and are the very salt of life. The patriarchal system, at its best, supplied this moral discipline; but it also worked injuriously in two most important respects.

Individual liberty was at a discount, and the status of woman was kept low. The fact of the matter is that despotism, whether in State or in family, is never favourable to individual liberty. To submit constantly to the will of others, to be accustomed to having one's own biases and opinions overruled by the biases and opinions of others—this is most detrimental to the individuality of character, without which no man can hope to accomplish anything good or great. Woman holds a degraded position in the old-fashioned family, first because she, too, like the junior male members must always defer to the authority of the head, and secondly, because female drudgery is more needed in a large household than it would be in a household consisting only of husband and wife and their children.

A change has however commenced which is sapping the basis of our family system. Like caste it has lost its religious sanction. Both Maine and Herbert Spencer tell us

\* Wordsworth—*Editor*.

that ancestor-worship which lies at the bottom of the system is a mark of low civilization, and the diffusion of the evolutionary theory of social institutions has divested the joint-family of the religious atmosphere which has hitherto hung about it. Another cause—and perhaps a more potent one—which is dissolving its bonds, is the sudden and undoubted mental superiority which the young generation has acquired over the old. In olden times there was no difference between the education of a father and his sons. Indeed, as the father was the principal educator of his children, he brought them up in his own ideas and beliefs, and in the majority of cases the mental stock of the children was rather less than more than that of the father. The superiority of the teacher was always recognised over his pupils, and in the old generation it is even now considered the very height of impertinence on a man's part to profess to know more than his master or teacher. The change in this respect has been very sudden. An amount of knowledge is taught to every school boy of which a man of the old type can have no idea. The knowledge of the young man may be superficial, but it is imposing by its very diversity and range. This mental superiority which the young have come to acquire over the old has made them in most cases conceited, and they have begun to despise the old generation. Now it is not in human nature to obey long those who have forfeited our respect, or to respect those whom we look upon as mentally our inferiors. The autocracy of the patriarch has therefore declined. Upon most things his children know more than he. He cannot hold them with his glittering eyes; they will not listen to him like a three years' child; the patriarch cannot have his will. There arise differences and divisions, resistance and opposition, and the household breaks up. Another cause of the decay of the joint-family is the facility of travel and communication which enables men to seek livelihood in distant parts of the country. In the pre-English era, travel involved serious risks of life and

property, and the existence of petty States, constantly fighting with one another, made it extremely perilous for people to shift from one place to another. Society was stationary, and men lived and died where they were born. Now, if a family consists of four brothers, their wives and children, each of these brothers may be employed at some distant town separated from the rest, and may thus be obliged to have his wife and children with him. When this state becomes common the necessity for separation for the purpose of earning a livelihood, contributes to the dissolution of the old family system itself.

Now these causes are enduring, because they are among the results of the action of European civilization upon India. The old family is dying, and will soon be dead. Much that is good will perish with much that is evil. Charity will decline, domestic affections will decline, the capacity for self-sacrifice will decline. It is not easy to tell what would fill their place. The loss is serious because the peculiar charm of the Indian character—its keen and tender sympathy with every kind of sorrow and pain—is fast passing away like the setting of a sun that shall rise no more. But if the incentive to the helping of others grows weaker, it may be hoped that the capacity for self-help will develop in its stead, and the spirit of enterprise will arise which an excessive attachment for the family has hitherto repressed. The decay of domestic despotism will be followed by an expansion of individual liberty, and will teach men to stand erect upon their own dignity in the face of every coercion—physical or moral. And last but not least, the position of woman will be raised,\* because she will no longer be the drudge of a mixed and numerous household, but the companion and helpmate of her husband and the guardian of her children.

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\* It will be raised with a vengeance when the franchise is extended to them — *Editor*



This leads me to the last point which concludes my survey of the social changes in India; namely, the status of Indian women. The most beneficial influence which England has exercised upon India is that the operations of which may be noticed in the change of public opinion regarding the position of woman in society. It is not necessary to describe the prevailing condition of our women. Ignorant superstitious, mere slaves to the whims of men; instruments of physical gratification, household drudges and child-bearing machines—this sums up without exaggeration or caricature their present lot. The change which has commenced in their condition is yet very slow and slight, but even its small beginnings are not without some significance and interest of their own. In this respect, the Legislature has been a most useful agent. The *Sati* was abolished by law. The widow re-marriage was ushered in by law. The age of Consent Act around which at one time there raged such a fierce storm of opposition and excitement—the opposition and excitement (I have to say this more in sorrow than in anger) of the leaders of public opinion in Bengal, has done something to brand as criminal one of the most shocking brutalities in the Indian usage. The crusade against child-marriage and forced widowhood, so ably and nobly led by Mr. Malabari has made a permanent impression upon the national conscience and given a decisive bias to enlightened thought. This is beyond doubt due to the friction of Indian with European intellect, and yet this is the one thing upon which the keenest differences of opinion exist among our leading men.

The conservatism of the Radical party upon the subject of women is accountable. In the first place the slightest practical alteration in the position of women is certain to bring on inconveniences, troubles, and domestic discomfort which so few of us are able to bear. In the second place, certain circumstances have prejudiced our minds against the

morality of European women, and we have therefore come to feel a certain amount of hesitation in educating our women after their fashion. To some extent this prejudice is born of our ignorance of the real nature of European women, to some extent it is due to our utter inability, in consequence of our early associations and habits of thought to realise and paint vividly upon the canvas of our imagination the picture of a society in which men and women mix freely and on terms of perfect equality, to some extent it may be due to the influence of the reaction which in England itself seems to be in progress against the radical theory of woman's position,\* to our study of the scandals of the Divorce Courts, and to our experience of the low sexual morality of low class Europeans in this country. It is difficult to ascertain the respective share of each of these elements in the genesis of this prejudice against the morals of European women, but I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that the prejudice is as baseless as it is pernicious. There is a *prima facie* presumption against the popular view, and in favour of the English women. No nation can long retain its greatness unless it rests upon character. National character is the sum of the character of the individual members of a nation, and individual character is the result in the first instance of the influences received through the teachings and examples of parents. If feminine morality is tainted it will be reflected in domestic life and through domestic life will run like poison through the arteries of society. If you admit the greatness of the English nation, you can not deny the greatness of its women.

Then, again, one of the best proofs of the purity of English women's moral, has always seemed to me to lie in English literature. A nation's literature is always a faithful

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\* As enunciated by Stuart Mill—*Editor*.

mirror of its ideas, morals and tastes. Nobody can mutilate or falsify it. A man of real literary genius follows the bent of his mind, and does not think of the trivial expedencies of the moment. The manners and morals of English society are faithfully portrayed in the best works of fiction and poetry. The artist paints what he believes to be the truth, and his work can hardly live long in this critical age if it does not "hold the mirror up to Nature" and paint Society as it really is. Now what idea of the morality of English women do we get from English literature? In poetry from Shakespear to Tennyson, and in the best works of fiction—in Scott, George Eliot, Dickens, Lytton, and Thackersey—the ideal of womanhood is much purer, nobler, and higher than any to be found within the whole range of our modern Indian literature. For those who may not like the use of foregoing adjectives in the comparative degree, I am willing to use them in the positive, and to say that the English ideal is at least as good as the Indian. But in that case I will compare English literature with our ancient literature, and not with that double-distilled Zolaism of our present vernacular books which, while they "Paint the mortal shame of nature with the living hues of art" corrupt the tastes and defile the morals of so many of our young men and women. The most audacious disparager of English woman's morality must admit that a society which can produce the prototypes of female characters depicted in Scott and Tennyson has a higher and worthier conception of womanhood than that which takes delight in the Arabian Nights, in Urdu lyrics, and in our popular love stories. I contend, therefore, that the popular notion that English women are not so chaste as Indian women is a mere prejudice; and, as I look upon it as a most pernicious prejudice, as one of the chief obstacles in the way of the elevation of our own women, I have tried at some length, considering the limits of my space to expose it, by showing its injustice and irrationality.

For the present, however, this prejudice is very commonly shared alike by the educated and the uneducated—and leads certain minds to strange conclusions. We are told: let us educate our women by all means, but let us not accord them the same or anything like the same freedom as their English sisters enjoy. The idea is, however, absurd because knowledge is power, and will win liberty for herself. You cannot by educating them create taste and aspirations in women the satisfaction of which they will not seek sooner or later. If you teach them knowledge, you at once weaken upon their minds the hold of all those beliefs and biases which make them contented with their present slavish position as one assigned to them by nature.

But even in this crude and illogical form, the idea that female education is a good, is one of the most beneficent products of English influences. The peace of our domestic life, and all our social progress now depend upon the realisation of this idea. It did not matter much if the elder generation did not educate their women, because in the past both sexes grew up under the same social, moral, and religious influences, which produced similarity of tastes and beliefs, and thus preserved the peace and harmony of domestic life. At present the new education has fixed a wide gulf between the young generation of men and their women. There is no religious sympathy, no moral sympathy, no intellectual sympathy, because the two sexes live in two different strata of civilization, breathing different atmospheres, and drawing their mental and moral sustenance from different and antagonistic sources. This disparity of tastes, inclinations beliefs and aspirations has gone far to mar the peace and felicity of our domestic life. It has also gone far to obstruct and retard the progress of social reform, because the ignorant conservatism of Indian women is simply insurmountable. It has, therefore' both on

personal and national considerations, become more necessary than ever that we should educate them, make them sharers and parteners in the rich inheritance of knowledge and enlightenment which has come to our possession. With female education will come not only domestic peace and harmony, but a new source of pleasures, pleasures which men derive from female society will be opened, ennobled, and purified, and feminine tenderness and sympathy, under the guidance of enlightened reason, will become one of the most potent instruments of social amelioration. A beginning has, however, been made. The seed has been sown; it is for us to nurture it and watch its growth; it will be for our children and our children's children to garner its sheaves.

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#### IV.—*Religious Changes.*

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Religion, as Carlyle has truly remarked, is the chief fact with regard to a man or a nation of men.\* In India it is all-in-all. It is the foundation of our laws. It is the soul of our morality. It is the chief inspiration of our literature and art. It gives unity to our national life, and the circulating sap to all our social institutions. Religion is a prominent feature in the Asiatic character everywhere, but even among the Asiatics, Hindus are the most religious people. From the time he draws his first breath till the time he breathes his last, the Hindu lives in an atmosphere of supernaturalism. Every act has a religious side; every private or public under-taking begins and ends with religion. The religious sentiment moulds his thought, colours his feelings, and penetrates every corner and cranny of his life. In his view worship is not one of the duties, it is the whole duty of man.

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\* Heroes — Editor.

Professor Max Muller has depicted this phase of Hindu life so well that I cannot resist the temptation of quoting it here "So far as we can judge" says he in his Lectures on Psychological Religions "a large class of people in India, not only the priestly class, but the nobility also, not only men but women also, never looked upon their life on earth as something real. What was real to them was the invisible, the life to come. What formed the theme of their conversations, what formed the subject of their meditations, was the Ideal that alone lent some kind of reality to this unreal phenomenal world. Whoever was supposed to have caught a new ray of truth was visited by young and old, was honored by princes and kings, nay, was looked upon as holding a position far above that of kings and princes. That is the side of the life of ancient India which deserves our study, because there has been nothing like it in the whole world, not even in Greece or in Palestine. . . . The pleasures of life and sensual enjoyments would in India as elsewhere dull the intellect of the many, and make them satisfied with a mere animal existence, not exempt from those struggles of envy and hatred which men show in common with the beasts. But the ideal life which we find reflected in the ancient literature of India must certainly have been lived at least by the few, and we must never forget that, all through history, it is the few not the many, who impress their character on a nation, and have a right to represent it as a whole."

The Mahomedan with whom the Hindu has lived for so many centuries, in a manner which is the despair of Anglo-Indian statesmanship, brought with him an intense faith from the West—perhaps in its concentrated intensity stronger than that of the Hindu—but there is this difference that while in the Mahomedan scheme of life Religion holds a limited though a prominent place, in the Hindu scheme it is everything. It is not necessary to inquire into the

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causes, of this phenomenon, or into the respective merits and demerits of the two systems. Both have their good and evil points, and both have served and do still serve a useful purpose in the social economy. The chief fact which I wish to notice is that India is inhabited by two races both of whom are famous for their intense religious spirit although the one is more so than the other.

It is well to take note of this fact at this stage, because it explains why England has failed hitherto to give India her creed. History does not speak of any conquest of one nation by another in which the conquered did not in time adopt the religion of the conqueror, or *vice versa*. The fact of the matter is that the conquering nation has had either physical or moral superiority over the conquered, and in both cases was in a position to force its tenets upon the weaker party. Rome gave the religion to the then civilized world by dint of physical as well as moral force. The barbarians who destroyed the Western Empire had nothing but physical superiority on their side as against the emasculated Roman people of those days; but in course of time the moral force of Christianity asserted itself and became the creed of the conquering race. The Mohamedan invasion of India offers another instance, but with a difference. The sword of Islam was the symbol of physical force, and prevailed against a people who had become debased and demoralised through causes extending across the centuries of the past. The work of religious conversion must have been very active during the Mohamedan *regime*, as it is now proved beyond all reasonable doubt, that the bulk of the Mohamedan population are converts from Hinduism. But besides the sword, some moral causes also helped the progress of Mohamedanism in India. Like Hinduism it is also an Asiatic religion and the spiritual atmosphere which hangs about it is very much like that which envelopes Hinduism. To a believer in popular Hinduism there

is a good deal in Islam with which he is familiar, and he cannot find much difficulty in leaving the one for the other. The Hindu does not require any special training to appreciate the virtues of the Moslem creed, nor, when he accepts it, does he feel himself spiritually much changed. The similarity of civilizations made the course of conversion smooth; while there is evidence to show that Hinduism too has made a deep impression upon Mohamedan ideas and practice. But the most singular phenomenon which we are witnessing in India is the accomplishment of a great conquest by the English nation, which has failed to touch our religion—a conquest in which the conquerors cannot give us a creed, neither will they take a creed from us. Religious conversion is not their policy; and moral persuasion which pre-supposes free religious discussion is rather a hindrance than a help to the spread of Christianity in this country. When I say that the English have not touched our religion, I only mean that their religion has made no impression upon ours, because it would appear that through the medium of their knowledge and civilization they have stirred the Hindu mind to its very depth and revolutionised its religious belief. Of this change I shall speak presently. That the English are not likely to adopt any Indian religion must be clear to every body who is not a visionary or an enthusiast. All the growing tendencies of modern civilization are against this idea. A religion which is dying in its own cradle-land is not likely to have a new birth in Europe. Nobody can deny that Hinduism is dying. The teaching, the disintegrating influences of which have been noticed upon our mental and moral conceptions, and upon our social and political institutions, is responsible for the decay of our faith also. The dominant note of this teaching is *Secularity*—the subjecting of every belief to the test of reason and experience, the interpreting of supernatural phenomena in the light of the known laws of nature.

Hinduism has been affected by this secular spirit of modern culture in various ways. Its popular forms have vanished and are vanishing before science like mists before the noon day sun. Its more metaphysical forms are dissolving under the fierce light of modern criticism. The teachings of Comte, Spencer, and Max Muller have enabled the younger generation to look at their oldest religious beliefs and institutions from an entirely new and strange mental standpoint. It may be interesting to examine briefly the manner in which the doctrines of these philosophers have modified and are modifying our religious beliefs.

The doctrine of social evolution as taught by Spencer and Comte seeks to establish a sort of organic unity in the history of human progress, past, present, and future. Society, we are told, is not a manufacture but a growth, and its ideas, beliefs, and institutions at every stage of its progress are organically connected with it, quite as natural and necessary as the physical and moral peculiarities which mark the various stages of an individual's life. Nations, like individuals, have their childhood, youth, manhood, and old age. Ideas and institutions suited to their infancy, perish when they reach the adult age, and some other ideas and institutions more suited to their advancing needs spring up. Comte's law of the three stages—*theological, metaphysical, and positive*—through which every nation has to pass on its journey to the highest goal of civilization, is really the parent of that theory of social evolution which Herbert Spencer has elaborated with such far-reaching generalizations from the physical sciences and such copious illustrations from history. With the help of the theory of heredity which plays such an important part in the evolutionary philosophy, each succeeding stage is proved as a necessary and inevitable product of the preceding stage of human progress. Fetichism is impossible among a people who in course of generations have inherited capacities for purer

and higher forms of religion. The Hottentots cannot produce a Shakespeare or a Milton, nor can a cannibal come from Belgravia. Despotism in state and family, priestcraft, belief in miracles and portents, and the habit of explaining natural phenomena upon supernatural grounds—these we are taught, are the traits of a low state of civilization all over the world. On the other hand, popular Government, freedom of the press, decline of priestcraft, and the decay of supernaturalism are everywhere the accompaniments of higher civilization.\*

There is a natural kinship between the ideas and institutions of every nation at every stage of its development. Habit which plays such an important part in human life has a physiological basis in the adaptation of nerves and muscles to a certain set of activities. The nervous modifications thus produced have a tendency to pass from parent to offspring. Emotional likes and dislikes, intellectual tastes, and the whole host of those feelings and desires of which social institutions are mere expressions and embodiments have a physiological and biological side and are accompanied, if not actually caused, by corresponding changes in the brain and the nervous system. Hence if we were to take extreme cases of people at the opposite poles of progress, we shall find that a savage is physically unfit to live the life of a highly civilized man, and *vice versa*. It is important to bear in mind the wonderful workings of the law of inheritance upon man, in order to be able to grasp fully the theory of human evolution as it is taught by Darwin and Spencer. "I do not think" as Mr. Bagehot acutely remarks "any who do not acquire, and it takes a hard effort to acquire, this notion of a transmitted nerve element will ever understand "the connective tissue" of civilization. We have here the continuous force which binds age to age, which enables each to begin with some improvement on the

\* See also Locky's Rationalism — *Editor*.

last, if the last did itself improve; which makes each civilization not a set of detached dots, but a line of colour, surely enhancing shade by shade. There is, by this doctrine, a physical cause of improvement from generation, and no imagination which has apprehended it can forget it; but unless you appreciate that cause in its subtle materialism, unless you see it as it were, playing upon the nerves of men, and age after age making nicer music from finer chords, you cannot comprehend the principle of inheritance either in its mystery or its power." (Physics and Politics p 8-9.)

The idea which is so beautifully expressed here—the idea that civilization is an organic growth—is a most powerful dissolvent of many social, political, and moral doctrines. It places a physical limit upon Reform by recognising the limited capacity in the nervous constitution of each generation for adapting itself to new conditions. In the light of this idea, political despotism, priestly domination, female servitude, and the primitive form of barter belong to one stage of civilization, and political and religious liberty, the emancipation of women, an elaborate trading system to another. Indian youths fresh from the study of Comte and Spencer, find it, therefore, hard to reconcile themselves to the religion of the ancient Hindus when their other institutions and ideas appear to them so very crude and primitive. They see that certain ideas and beliefs are common among the savage tribes of the present day: they naturally discard them when they find them imbedded in the ancient civilization of their own country. Under the influence of the evolutionary doctrine, they come to cherish an unconcealed contempt for their past,—first, because they grow up with a presumption that if there has been a general evolution of humanity from lower to higher forms of existence, the present civilization must be superior to that which it has supplanted, and secondly,

by having come to recognise the inferiority of ancient India to England in the physical sciences, in Government, and in a good many social institutions, they can hardly retain an unbounded faith in the perfection of her religious system.

I do not mean to say that this is a legitimate inference from the premises supplied by Spencer and Comte, but it is true that the majority of young Indians who read the philosophy of evolution very often think upon lines I have just indicated. I am fully aware that the history of ancient India is yet very imperfect, but even in its imperfect form it bears very legible traces of ideas and institutions which belong to a very high stage of civilization. Indeed the philosophy of ancient India—specially her religious philosophy—is inferior to none which the human mind has yet produced, and, even according to the evolution hypothesis, may be the fragment of a high civilization, the wreck of a great continent which the tide of time has now washed away. Mr. Spencer himself corrects the presumption that because we are the latest arrivals on earth, we are therefore necessarily “foremost in the files of time.” “While the degradation theory as currently held is untenable, the theory of progression, taken in its unqualified form, seems to me untenable also. If, on the one hand, the notion that savagery is caused by lapse from civilization, is irreconcilable with the evidence there is, on the other hand, no adequate warrant for the notion that the lowest savagery has always been as low as it is now. It is quite possible, and, I believe highly probable, that retrogression has been as frequent as progression” (Principles of Sociology p. 106.)

According to this view one may be a thorough—going evolutionist, and a believer in the all perfection of Hinduism at the same time. But this is not the attitude of the majori-

ty of the educated Hindus, and the reason of this is not far to seek. In the moral as well as in the physical world every action has a reaction, and social progress is rhythmic. When any current of thought or feeling flows strongly and long in one direction, it is generally followed by an equally strong current in the opposite direction. In India there is at present a strong reaction against the system of philosophy and religion which centuries upon centuries guided and governed its mental and spiritual tendencies. Like every reaction it is marked by an undue disregard of the old and an excessive passion for the new.

Professor Max Muller's teachings have in a measure supplied some corrective to this phase of Indian thought, but they have at the same time co-operated with the teachings of Spencer and Comte in accelerating the growth of the spirit of secularity or rationalism in this country. Professor Max Muller, more than any other European philosopher, has popularised our Sanskrit literature and philosophy in the West, and given it a very high idea of our religion. His noble panegyrics upon the Vedanta Philosophy thrill us with patriotic pride in our ancient spiritual inheritance, and when we see that one of the foremost linguists and philosophers of the Nineteenth Century speaks so highly of our religion, it is no wonder if a good many sceptical spirits among us begin to feel sceptical about their own scepticism regarding the grandeur of our ancient faith, and cast a longing, lingering look behind in order to catch a glimpse of it through the clouds which seem to be gathering round its setting sun. "Lectures on the Origin of Religion," "India, what can it teach us," "Lectures on the Vedanta Philosophy" and a number of other writings of this great man have done much to moderate the force of reaction against the old order, and to create a genuine enthusiasm in the Hindu mind for the Religion of the Vedas.

But great as is the influence which Professor Max Muller has exercised in creating in our minds a fresh interest in the spiritual past of our country, and in breathing a new life into the worn-out frame of Hinduism itself, the influence which he is exercising in placing our whole religious superstructure upon purely rational and secular foundations is much greater. His teachings upon comparative mythology cut at the root of popular Hinduism, by offering a scientific explanation of the origin of myths and fables. His lectures on the Science of Language divest the Sanskrit language of every divine attribute, and his commentaries on the Vedas are at bottom but studies in anthropology. There is nothing divine about them according to him; they are but the most faithful record of the civilization of one of the oldest branches of the Aryan family of mankind. Everything is worked out logically and scientifically, and the educated Indians who study these things closely, cannot, if they are true to their training, long resist the conclusions forced upon them by Logic and Science. If the Vedas are not revealed books, if they are a history of the spiritual progress of the Hindu race, then Hinduism as a religion—Hinduism as it has been believed by millions on millions ever since it came into existence—can hardly gain any strength from the teachings of Professor Max Muller. Indeed the more we come under his influence, the more rationalistic will be the view which we will take of Hinduism, and in this respect, he will have very nearly as great a share in the disintegration of our ancestral Religion—the gradual dissolution of a system the first beginnings of which are lost in the twilight of the past—as Comte and Spencer.

These, then, are the channels—the Positive Philosophy of Comte, the evolution hypothesis of Spencer, the Philology and Comparative Mythology of Max Muller—through which the secular or rationalistic spirit of modern thought is colouring, modifying, transforming our religious belief. Hinduism



cannot long resist its impact. The waves are beating against its outer walls. A rift has already been made and the water is gradually percolating. In course of time the rift will widen, and then the tide will burst in with full force, and the great structure which has for so many ages been a fortress of refuge to millions of men and women struggling against the storms of fate, will be swept away. Who can contemplate this change without emotion? Our hearts ache at the spectacle, our eyes fill with tears.

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"I am" says Mr. Mill in his autobiography "one of the very few examples in this country, of one who has, not thrown off religious belief, but never had it." The spiritual phase which is here described as a singular and exceptional phenomenon, is fast growing into a common feature of the rising generation of India. The young generation has come into the world at a time when its household gods have lost their divinity, when no religious training exists, and when the old religion has become an organised hypocrisy. Its education is scientific and secular, and its priests and parents who still cling to the dying faith seem to have given up the idea of subjecting it to any spiritual discipline. Thus it is that it has no idea of religion. It is destitute of the religious sense, not, because it has thrown off religious belief, but because it never had it. Rarely, very rarely indeed has religious scepticism ever affected so large a body of men in so short a time. The spiritual distance between the young generation of Indians and the generation just preceding it is quite as great, if not greater than that which divides the England of to-day from the England of the 15th and 16th centuries. In this sudden disruption of spiritual bonds lies the peculiar interest, perhaps, the danger of the present

crisis. The spiritual anarchy thus caused by a great mental revolution in which

"Faiths and Empires gleam "

Like wrecks of a dissolving dream,"

may well be described in the words of Mr. John Morley: "The old hopes have grown pale, the old fears dim; strong sanctions are become weak, and once vivid faiths very dumb. Religion, whatever destinies may be in store for it, is at least for the present hardly any longer an organic power. It is not that supreme, penetrating, controlling, decisive part of a man's life, which it has been, and will be again. Those who dwell in the towers of ancient faiths look about them in constant apprehension, misgiving and wonder, with the hurried uneasy mien of people living amid earthquakes. Conscience has lost its strong and irresistible energy, and the sense of personal responsibility lacks sharpness of edge. The native hue of spiritual resolution is sicklied over with the pale cast of distracted, wavering, confused thought. The souls of men have become void. Into the void have entered in triumph the seven devils of secularity."

Will a generation which has moved into the spiritual latitudes just described accept Christianity in the place of that which it has discarded? No; it will not. Every religion depends for its success upon three conditions; its timeliness; its intrinsic worth; its power of evoking popular enthusiasm. Christianity in modern India lacks all these essential conditions of success.

It lacks the essential of *timeliness*, because it is opposed to the main currents of modern thought. Its supernaturalism is opposed to science. Its miracles are believed to be no more than the visions of a disordered fancy, the phantoms of a diseased imagination. The immaculate conception, the Resurrection, the ascension, the incident of

the Gadarene swine—all these are mere myths if there is any truth in the well-established axioms of modern philosophy. Either Christian theology is right or science is right in its interpretations of man's place in Nature; but both cannot be right at one, and the same time. If we accept the one, we are bound to reject the other. Christianity comes to India with its complete paraphernalia of supernatural conceptions. It does not seem very probable that a generation which has out-grown the supernaturalism of its own creed will accept the supernaturalism of another.

This is one obstacle in the way of the progress of Christianity in India; another is that even at their best its teachings are by no means superior to those of Hinduism. The sermon on the Mount is among the noblest utterances that ever fell from the lips of man. But it can be matched with passages from the Bhagwat Gita, from Budha's teachings, and from the Upanishads. The philosophic Christianity as taught by the neo-Platonists of Alexandria and the Schoolmen of the middle ages can hardly dazzle those minds who have once become familiar with the subtleties of the Vedic Philosophy. "If I were asked," says Professor Max Muller "under what sky human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered over the problems of life and found solutions to some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India." What is the doctrine of atonement, or the Christian conception of Hell and Heaven as compared with the theory of Karma? The former cannot pretend to have scientific basis, the latter is the highest generalisation from the uniformity of nature. A rationalistic mind will accept this sooner than anything which Christian theology offers; and therefore in its struggle for mastery over the spiritual life of the Hindu, the Bible has very slender chances of success.

The third and last cause why Christianity can never thrive in this country is that it lacks those qualities which appeal to people's sympathies and evoke their enthusiasm. It comes to us through a nation which is intensely practical and which is notorious for its exclusive habits and rough manners. Worse religions than Christianity have achieved greater conquests by virtue of the example of their teachers and preachers. In religion, if anywhere, example is better than precept, and he who is able to communicate to the masses the magnetism of his conduct will succeed even with an inferior creed where a cold-blooded philosopher would fail. Christianity has made so little progress in India because the character of its followers does not touch our hearts. The English people who live in India never forget that they are the conquering race. In their dealing with Indians they are not noted for any extraordinary display of those feelings of charity and gentleness which are among the cardinal virtues of their religion. The missionaries have made a great mistake—an irreparable mistake as I think—in adopting the ways of those Anglo-Indians who are more directly concerned with the Government of the country. They have become exclusive like the Civilian—nearly as arrogant, unsympathetic, and domineering. People whose experience of religious teachers has been gained from contact with those ascetic saints who discarding all power and self go about in rags giving spiritual instruction to their followers, mixing with the lowest and the poorest sons of men, can hardly understand a religion the teachers of which appear before them as members of a branch of the Civil Service—receiving pay for their duty—and keeping themselves as much aloof from the general mass as they possibly can. This is not the manner in which religious missions succeed in the world. The Christian Missionaries might have done something if in the beginning of their career they had condescended to practise what they had come here to preach to the benighted heathen—the doctrine

of universal brotherhood which makes no distinction between the rich and the poor, the high and the low—and to mix with the Indian people as their great master had mixed with the fishermen of Galilee. They have lost the opportunity ; they cannot recover it now. The spread of education has made Christian or any religions proselytism on a large scale impossible in India. But if they make their example a little more exemplary, if they live the life of Christ, if they mix with the people, make themselves partners in their joys and griefs, let them see that whoever else may quarrel for place and power, they are free from the petty prejudices of race and position, and are ready to extend the right hand of fellowship to suffering humanity whatever its colour and creed—if they once make up their minds to be Christian Missionaries in the true sense of the term—in the sense in which those holy men were who tamed down the ferocity of the Goths, the Vandals and the Huns of the West—although they may not make many religious converts, yet will they most certainly fashion many lives after the model of Christianity and impart a powerful stimulus to most of those reforms which as possessors of a superior civilization it must be their desire to see accomplished in this country.

If Europe has failed to give us her creed, is any one of our own indigenous religious movements destined to command the future ? These are three—Brahmoism, the Neo-Vedism of Swami Dayanand ; and Theosophy. On the present occasion only a very hurried and imperfect review of them is possible.

In order of time Brahmoism comes first, because it originated among a people who were the first to receive English civilization. It commenced with the educated classes and bears very clear traces of European influences. It was the product of study by some of the most active intellects

of Bengal of Christian Theology and Philosophy. It is a form of theism, but one more closely allied with the Unitarian Christianity of Europe than with the theism of Veda. The idea of repentance, the doctrine of the sonship of man and the fatherhood of God are derived from Christianity and are indeed expressed in Christian phraseology. The Logos of the Neo-Platonists plays a considerable part in its teachings, and a good many sermons in which Keshub Chunder Sen—the most brilliant and popular of its teachers—speaks of Christ may well have been delivered from any Christian pulpit. But its doctrine of the synthesis of religions is clearly derived from European philosophy. It has thus a foot in both worlds—through its doctrine of religious synthesis it belongs to the world of modern thought; through its spiritual teachings it belongs to the Christian world. Having from the very beginning fallen into the hands of metaphysicians—whose metaphysics was mostly Christian—it became metaphysical too, and went forth to conquer the world not as a religion but as a philosophy. The result was that it failed to touch the masses and only became the creed of the most intellectual section of the people in Bengal. I do not think it will ever become the religion of India. It lacks the primary quality of a national religion by being itself a product, if not of *denationalising*, at least, of international and cosmopolitan influences. The popular mind cannot be drawn to it, because it is too metaphysical for it, and is without a tradition which appeals so powerfully to popular imagination, and also because its outward form and drapery are all derived from the archives of Christian theology which can never be pleasing to our national taste. The educated classes are not likely to find much attraction in a creed which is so closely allied with Christian theology, which talks of inspiration of prophets, of repentance, and of spiritual communion with

God. The question is not whether it is a good creed or a bad one, but whether in the spiritual latitudes towards which the Indian mind has moved, it has any chance of thriving or not; and I have, upon considerations to which I have just now briefly alluded, come to the conclusion that it has not

The next movement is the Arya Samaj which was founded by Swami Dayanand, the greatest Indian Reformer perhaps which the Nineteenth Century has produced. Dayanund's movement is certainly national in the sense of being an independent and spontaneous product of the Indian mind, and it is, therefore, less revolutionary than Brahmoism. The gist of its teachings is a form of reformed Hinduism resting upon the Vedas as the revealed word of God. Idolatry is condemned in terms of unmeasured severity and so is priestcraft. It is a protest against the corrupt and priest-ridden Hinduism of these days—an appeal to the great deep heart of the people to turn to the purer and higher creed of the Vedas. It has come to acquire a great hold upon a considerable section of the Hindu community—consisting mostly of those who have not yet broken completely with their spiritual past—and certain forces are at work which may strengthen this hold still further. Professor Max Muller never accepted Swami Dayanund's rendering of the Vedas, and yet such is the irony of fate that the diffusion of the Professor's writings in India is doing more than anything else to popularise the Neo-Vedism of the great Hindu teacher, and to induce even the most advanced minds, among us to follow amid the glare of gas and electricity, the light of the sacred flame of the Vedic philosophy, as it glimmers dimly through the mist of the ages. There is a good deal in the Swami's teachings with which it is impossible to reconcile the postulates of modern thought,

and unless I am much mistaken the idea of Vedic revelation is not likely to revive again in this country. But in some quarters one may perceive the first symptoms of a revival of Neo-Vedism, a direct result as I think of Dayanand's teachings and Professor Max Muller's works, and some people are beginning to think that this may become the future religion of India. In social matters, as a wise man tells us, undying hope is the secret of vision, and it is possible that things which are as yet hid from the eye of logic and science may have been revealed to men whose faith is more robust and whose hopes are richer. But for the present I think it is too early to pronounce any decided opinion regarding a movement which may be no more than a passing phase of our spiritual life. Anyhow this may be said of Swami Dayanand's propagandism, that in so far as it rests upon the Vedic revelation it will share the fate of other revealed religions, and a generation, which has been bred up under the influence of positive philosophy, will not, unless it undergoes some great spiritual change of which there are no signs at present, accept it; but in so far as it is a dissolvent of priestcraft and caste and anthropomorphic beliefs it will most assuredly pass into the national life of the people.

The third great spiritual force which is working upon the Indian mind is Theosophy. One is obliged to speak of it seriously because some serious and earnest men have been caught in its net. It is a curious mixture of Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroasterianism, Christianity, and Science. The witches, cauldron in *Macbeth* had fewer ingredients in it than those which seem to be boiling in the cauldron of Theosophy. The Egyptian crocodile, the Assyrian bull, the Hindu monkey, the Christian dove, the owl of Minerva and the rat of Ganesh; the fossilised bones of Osiris and Zeus, Daytiyas of Hindu legends and the cyclopes of Homer; the seven



sleepers with the faithful dog; the golden calf of the Israelites and the Ormuzd and Ahriman of the Parsees, the Hindu Rishi, the Christian saint, the Buddhist hermit, the naturalist Darwin, the spiritualist Eliphas Levi, the impostor Cagliostro, the hand of Huxley, the leg of Tyndall, the entrails of Swedenborg, all these curiosities and delicacies are being boiled together to serve as a grand dish for those whose spiritual palate likes variety. This is not a caricature of Theosophy.\* Those who have read its literature will find that the curious mixture of old and new, of religions and legends and philosophies which the world has produced is truly astonishing and bewildering. There is truth behind every myth, and every superstition has a spiritual explanation. This is the peculiar part of the teachings of Theosophy, as the other two objects—the diffusion of the idea of universal brotherhood and the cultivation of Oriental literature—have nothing religious about them, and are not its exclusive possessions.

Its principal teaching is spiritualism or occultism which it tries to show is the common basis of all religions. It is a most uncompromising protest against modern science. Its theory of the Universe and the Scientific theory are as the poles asunder. No human ingenuity can reconcile "the Secret Doctrine" with "the Origin of species."† Theosophy has beyond doubt unhinged and utterly confounded the mind of that section of our people which has come under its influence. It has tried to perform the marvellous feat of accepting scientific theories for the physical world, and spiritual theories for the spiritual world, and this has been its chief attraction for those whose acquaintance with western thought is slight, and who therefore find that while

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\* See Dr. Saper's paper Vol. 11, *Editor*.

† (1) By Madame Blavatsky, (2) Darwin—*Editor*.

one side of Theosophy satisfies their heads by speaking to them in terms of positive science upon earthly matters, its other side captivates their hearts by tickling their national vanity as regards the spiritual pre-eminence of their ancient lore, and by stimulating that inherited tendency to supernaturalism which their education may have dulled but has not utterly destroyed. But I do not think this spiritual mood will last long, and even now any man who has got eyes in in head can see that a re-action has already commenced, and the time is not far distant when it will pass away.

I may be right or I may be wrong in my views regarding the natures and fates of the three religious movements of our times; but this is certain that each of them is a protest against the existing religion with which our national morality is bound up, and exhibits in its teachings those rationalistic tendencies which are the distinguishing features of modern thought. Each of them is in revolt against the grosser forms of supernaturalism, and tolerates more or less the criticism of religious theories. In this respect all the three movements have become the allies of what I have called the scientific spirit in its destructive influences upon the popular creed, and I have shown that the constructive efforts yet made by the Indian mind do not promise to produce any durable results. The everlasting "nay" is reached but whether it will lead us to the everlasting "yea,"\* and if so, whether it will be by the old roads which we have quitted or by some new ones, is more than I can tell. The humble object of these articles is simply to notice some broad tendencies of modern civilisation in various spheres, and I have pointed out that in the sphere of religion

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\* Carlyle's *Sartor*—Editor.

the spirit of secularity is working a most revolutionary change, some of the practical consequences of which, as I will show before I conclude this paper—the last of the series on “THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES,”—are of the gravest concern both to the moralist and the statesman.

In the first place, the influence of the priest has faded away altogether. It is true that the priest had become intolerable, and deserved to lose his bad eminence, but the decay of priest-craft which is one of the most cohesive forces of society is always a serious matter, and seldom fails to weaken the capacity for acting in concert of the people among whom it takes place.

In the second place, the decay of religious belief has left our national morality without a foundation. When we have come to discard the supernatural in religion, we can hardly long retain an ethical system which rests upon a supernatural basis. The growth of secular morality—morality resting upon purely human sanctions and capable of supplying adequate motive for virtue and right conduct—has become indispensable. For the present, however, it seems that the religious sanction has vanished before any human sanction has had time to grow up, and an utter wreck has overtaken the moral system which has produced some of the noblest specimens of humanity. What this means will become intelligible if we glance at one or two facts of our modern political history. Numerically the Mohamedan community is much weaker than the Hindu. Compared with ourselves the Mohamedans are backward in education and poor in material resources. They are behind the Hindus in the race of life, and for some time are sure to remain so. But politically, that is, as part

of the body politic they are the stronger party. Upon every occasion which touches their interests, particularly their spiritual interests, they display greater efforts of united action than their Hindu brethren. In almost all the religious disputes which have disgraced this country during the past few years, Mohamedans showed that unity was strength, while Hindus betrayed an amount of apathy and even disunion which although good in the interests of the public peace, yet points out most plainly to the decay of the Hindu character which has followed upon the track of religious decadence. The fact of the matter is that the Mohamedans are more united than the Hindus, because their faith is stronger than ours. It is true they too have in a measure caught the contagion of scepticism, and are no longer now what they were half a century back. But as compared with the Hindus they are still conservative in religion. They are yet capable of high efforts of religious zeal; we have lost that capacity. Although a large number of Mohamedans have now received higher education and count among them some clever writers and thinkers, who are in no way inferior to the best minds among the Hindus, yet it is a noteworthy fact that while few, very few of them ever show any traces of scepticism in their writings, the Hindu press teems with the most revolutionary utterances upon religion. This shows more than anything else that the hold of religion is stronger upon the Mohamedan than upon the Hindu mind, and this explains in a measure why the former possesses a large fund of national enthusiasm, which is always a great

political force while the latter lacks it. The decay of religious zeal in India before any equally strong patriotic zeal has sprung up in its place, is, therefore, a sign of the times which ought to awaken serious reflections in the minds of those who have to mould India into the unity of a nation.

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## THE REFORM PROPOSALS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.\*

Gentlemen,—In moving this Resolution I will have to crave your indulgence and your patience in a very ample measure. I wish I could deal with the subject in a manner worthy of its great importance and great urgency; but even if I had the power and the ability to do so, I should hardly find myself able to say even half of what could be said in regard to its many salient points, within any space of time that even your kindness and indulgence could accord. But I hope, before I sit down, I may have given you some idea of the great scheme of reform which the Government has placed before the public; and also some idea of the serious and, in some respects, fatal objections that can, in my humble opinion, be urged against that scheme. I, therefore begin with one or two preliminary matters which seem to deserve some notice.

We know that the scheme was launched forth at a time when India was passing through a period of severe trials and tribulations, when the policy of coercion—inaugurated by a reforming Viceroy and sanctioned by a Radical Secretary of State—was in full swing; when some of the highest officials here had taken utter leave of their senses and were hurling their thunderbolts against the educated classes; when one of the noblest sons of the Punjab† who is also one of the ornaments of the whole country, had been deported without being charged with any offence or offences, and without trial for some shadowy reasons of State which Mr. Winston Churchill has called the negation of law; when the right of public speaking had been suppressed in two provinces; when

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\* Speech delivered at the Lucknow Provincial Conference in 1908.

† Lala Lajpat Rai who has created a new spirit since his return from America and who is by far the greatest orator in Urdu.—*Editor.*

schoolboys were being flogged for indiscreet political conduct, and when even some responsible Englishmen were not ashamed to recommend for the governing of India those methods which have brought about such glorious results in Russia. At such time of lamentation for us, and of humiliation for Englishmen, the reform proposals were brought out. Mr. Morley boasted amidst the cheers of his supporters that in persisting in his policy of reform he wanted to show to the people of India and to the whole world that he and his Government were not afraid of the Indian discontent, but were courageous enough to persist in their policy in spite of that discontent. I do not doubt that Mr. Morley had to screw up his courage to the sticking point in allowing the reform scheme to go forth in his name;\* for I do not believe that there ever was any measure of Indian reform which, by its futility, its solemn trifling, its concealed and insidious attempt to break up the political solidarity of the Indian people, required less courage—although not less cunning—than the great measure for which we are asked to swear eternal love and gratitude to its authors. Yes, gentlemen, the reform of the Indian constitution, I admit, does require courage—and courage of a high stamp—in an Indian Secretary of State; for he and his Parliament alone can be the champions of the Indian people against the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy. If he and his Parliament can withstand the force of this body; if they can do anything in opposition to the Anglo-Indian official, and the Anglo-Indian Press which, with a few honourable exceptions, is a semi-official press; if they can take a step forward in the direction of our popular liberties; then indeed they would convince us of their courage. To sanction a scheme concocted by the Simla clique and calculated from beginning to end to mock our real demands and to delude public opinion in England, does not

\* The famous chapter in the *Recollections* headed "A page in Imperial History" throws a flood of light on the manner in which the Reform Act was hammered into shape—*Editor*.

require much courage. Mr. Morley is a veteran politician; he has exceptional knowledge and experience of recent Irish history; and of all men he at least ought to have known that at a time of great unrest, of great national indignation, disappointment, and irritation, nothing but very liberal and very generous measures of reform could allay public feeling and restore public confidence. On the contrary, the present scheme has roused all our suspicions against the policy of Government; for I hope to show you later on that when stripped of all its hypocrisies and plausibilities, the scheme is based, not upon trust, but upon distrust in the people. Well, distrust is apt to beget distrust, and I must say that I consider it a right instinct in the people which has checked them from going into ecstasies over the scheme. (Cheers.)

In the very first paragraph of the Government of India's letter, containing the reform scheme, care is taken to show to the Indian people that it was not their prayers and entreaties which had moved the Government; that it was not due to our agitation that the Government in some measure accepted our demand and was prepared to make a concession to justice;—no, it would not be politic to say so; it would encourage the agitator and lead the people into the mischievous belief that by persistent endeavours and entreaties, Government can be made to listen to reason; and so we are told that "the Government of India had of their own initiative taken into their consideration the question of giving the people of India wider opportunities of expressing their views on administrative matters." So be it.—Mr. Morley has told us about a great Frenchman, who, at a critical moment in his country's fortunes, cried out: 'Let my name be blotted out from the memories of men if thereby France can be saved.' Our patriotic leaders, who have worked for us during the last thirty or forty years, who have matured public opinion and touched the conscience of Government, can well afford to be ignored and denied the credit



of their whole work; if even this would be an incentive to our rulers to do something for us. One important admission the Government of India's letter contains which is worthy of note. "The reforms then introduced" (that is, in the passing of the Councils Act of 1892), comprising the enlargement of the Legislative Councils, recognition of the elective principle, the admission of interpellations, and the discussion of the Budget, were held to be justified by the spread of English education, by the increased employment of natives of India in the actual administration of the country, and by the indubitable proof which they had given of their intellectual fitness for such employment." Then the letter goes on to say that the number and influence of the educated classes have since increased considerably; and that besides them "the ruling chiefs, and the landholding and commercial classes, possessing a material interest in the country, and representing the most powerful and stable element of Indian society, have now become qualified to take a more prominent part in public life, and to render a larger measure of assistance to the Executive Government. They no longer stand aloof from the new social and political conditions which affect the course of Indian affairs, they have profited greatly by the educational advantages offered to them under British rule: and they are anxious to be afforded an opportunity of expressing their views on matters of practical administration." So you see, gentlemen, that a demand, which we have been told *ad nauseum*, is a spurious and artificial demand having its root and origin in the educated malcontents of Bengal and the Deccan—for which the people of India do not care, for which their natural leaders do not care—such an absurd and unnatural demand turns out to be the demand not only of the growing educated classes, but also of ruling chiefs, of our aristocracy, of our merchantile and landed classes; in other words it turns out to be a national demand. (Cheers.) I say, gentlemen,

that this is a significant admission on the part of Government that what we have been crying for is something which passes beyond the limits of the educated classes—that our cry is the general cry of all India; and that in facing it the Government is constrained to admit that it is face to face with a great national demand. “The Government of India” to use their own words, “recognise the essential justice of the claim that is put forward, and they are convinced that it is possible, without neglecting the other interests and obligations involved, to move gradually forward towards the fulfilment, in no grudging spirit, of the pledge which the peoples of India are entitled to regard as inviolable.” Now, gentlemen, you will see presently how far under the proposed scheme the essential justice of our claim has been kept in view, how far the concession made is in a generous and not a grudging spirit, and how far our belief is likely to increase in the inviolability of the pledge.

Now, it is generally recognised on all sides that Government in order to perform its work properly and to the benefit of the country must, under certain conditions and limitations, secure the advice and co-operation of the Indian people. It is also equally recognised that competent men for the discharge of this important function can be found in the country. The Government scheme proceeds upon this basis. It provides for a larger representation of the people in the Councils of Government, for the discharge of an advisory function and an advisory function alone. We say this is not enough; the basis is too narrow, a purely consultative function will not be adequate; some provision must be made for our participation in the Executive Government of the country. Nothing short, of that will satisfy our legitimate aspirations. But this point I do not propose to discuss on the present occasion. I confine myself to the discussion and examination of those proposals only which are embodied in the Government

scheme. It is sought to bring the Government into contact with a larger surface of public opinion—and this by two means. *First*, by establishing Advisory Councils—Imperial and Provincial; and *secondly*, by increasing the number of non-official members in the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils.

I take up the proposal regarding the Advisory Councils, first. The Government feels the evils arising from its want of touch with the real mind of the country; it is aware that its motives and measures are often misunderstood by the people; that the right of interpellation, as it exists at present, is not enough to remove those misapprehensions. "The Legislative Councils," it says "are called together only when there is legislation to be undertaken; their meetings are too infrequent to offer the means of confidential and intimate consultation between Government and its subjects, and the strict procedure by which they are restrained naturally tends to formality." To cure this defect it proposes to establish Advisory Councils. These Councils in the case of the Imperial Council shall consist of ruling chiefs and landed magnates—in the case of Provincial Councils shall consist of landed magnates with a slight sprinkling of the professional and other classes; their members shall be nominated; they shall receive no legislative recognition; they shall meet only when called by the Viceroy or the Lieutenant-Governor, as the case may be; they may be consulted collectively or individually; they will not offer any advice on their own initiative; it would be for the Government to decide upon what matter they should be consulted; their advice will be private, informal, and confidential; and their proceedings and advice would not be published except when the Government chooses to do so. Now, Gentlemen, I think I can say this without fear of contradiction, that such Advisory Councils no sane man in the country has ever

asked for. No sane Indian, I hope, will accept them now that they are offered. (Hear, hear.) The very constitution of the Councils is enough to show their mischief. How ruling chiefs and landed magnates, who as a body, barring honorable exceptions, are the most narrow-minded and most illiberal section of the Indian community, can represent the views of the Indian people, I, for one, fail to perceive. It is not right to compare the proposed Advisory Council to the House of Lords. It is sheer injustice to the House of Lords to do so. That body consists of noblemen who now have come to be closely allied with the commoners; who are so situated that upon no important matter they can oppose the people with impunity; who are amenable to public opinion; and whose power in the constitution itself is placed under the House of Commons. Is that the position of the Nizam of Hyderabad or the Maharaja of Jaipur? (No, No;) they are semi-independent rulers, and the opinion of the people of British India cannot be the slightest check upon their action. So you create a body that will not be amenable to our public opinion whose members will not be responsible to the people but to the power which can make and unmake them; and the judgments of these irresponsible creatures of Government you propose to throw into the scale against the judgments of those who will speak under a sense of full responsibility to the people whom they represent. (Cheers). What qualifications does a ruling chief possess for advising the British Government in the work of its administration? But besides, even if our ruling chiefs were as wise as Solomon and as virtuous as Marcus Aurelius, I should still object to them on this ground, among others, that they have no right to interfere in our matters when we—British Indians—have no right to interfere in theirs. (Hear, hear.) In all matters of internal administration—in all matters of domestic reforms—the Native Chief has no more right to intrude his opinion upon us than Count Okuma of Japan

has. (Cheers.) What applies to Native Chiefs applies, in a lesser degree of course, to our landed magnates. They are not in touch with the people; they do not occupy themselves with matters which occupy the time and energy of the most serious part of our nation, and no advice that they can offer will carry any weight with the people. There are able and public-spirited men among them; but surely it ought not to be beneath their dignity to sit in the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils. If some of them are fired with the noble ambition of taking part in the Government of their country, there is the field for them.\*

Why separate them from the intellectual classes of the country; why by shutting them up in the gilded cage of an Advisory Council, deprive them even of that little liberty of enjoying light and air which is possessed by their other fellow-countrymen? (Cheers.) Then the function which is proposed to be assigned to them is an insult to their position and their sense of self-respect. They cannot open their mouth except as to matters placed before them by Government. They are supposed to be so thin-skinned that they cannot bear public criticism; the Prime Minister of England can bear it, the Viceroy of India can bear it; but a landed magnate cannot; and therefore their proceedings must be private and confidential. (Cheers.) I have heard about the canary bird that the darker you make its cage the sweeter it sings. I am not sure that our landed magnates in order to sing their sweet notes must be placed behind a thick curtain. (Loud cheers and laughter.) Then it will rest with the Government to publish their views when it so chooses. The one certain impression to which this will give rise in the public mind, and which will persist and will be hard

\* Raja Kali Charan Misra (Bareilly) and others are taking a vigorous part and the Government is quite aware of it—Editor.

to remove, will be that Government will keep the Councilors' view secret when they are opposed to it, and will publish it only when they support it upon any measure which it finds is opposed by the people's representatives. It is not good for any body to be freed from his responsibility to public opinion. It would be positively bad for the Councillors to free them or screen them from such responsibility, as it would insensibly lead even the best of them to make the pleasure or displeasure of Government the test of their political conduct. Such Advisory Councils will undoubtedly come to be looked upon as a 'counterpoise' to the popular element in the Government, as a body set up for the purpose of opposing and discrediting the opinion of the educated classes in the country. A conflict between the two forces—the progressive and the reactionary—will thus arise; and the Government instead of gaining anything will find itself in the end much weakened. Anyhow, we can have no part in this measure; and I for one shall not be at all sorry if it is dropped altogether. But, should Government persist in carrying this measure through, then in order to obviate its mischief as far as possible, the *first* thing upon which we must insist is to have no ruling chiefs in these Councils. *Secondly*, a certain proportion of the instructed and independent classes must be introduced into them; *thirdly* they must be given power, under certain conditions, to meet whenever they please, and to advise Government upon any matter of public importance they please; *fourthly*, their proceedings should be published except when for reasons of state, secrecy may be thought necessary, and, *fifthly*, a certain proportion of these councils should be elected. If some such modifications are accepted, then and then only may we hope that the Advisory Councils may be of some service to the country. (Cheers.)

Now, coming to the proposals relating to the enlargement of the Legislative Councils, the most important points pressed by the Government are, *first*, that there must be a standing majority of official members in the Councils; *second*, that the educated classes have usurped a much larger share in the Councils than is their due, that this share should be reduced, and the proportion of other classes, particularly the landed class, should be increased; *third*, that some provision should be made for the representation of minorities, especially, the Mahomedan minority, by creating special electorates for them and by nomination; *fourth*, that the franchise should be based upon class, caste, and religious distinction from the Municipal Boards upwards. Gentlemen, I look upon every one of these proposals as unwise, retrograde, and harmful to the last degree. (Cheers.) The proposals, as they are, are bad enough; but the spirit that pervades them is worse; for, it is the spirit not of trust but of distrust in the people; not of faith in their good will but of suspicion. (Hear, hear.) "The principle of a standing majority" we are told "is accepted by the Government as an entirely legitimate and necessary consequence of the nature of the paramount power in India, and so far as they know, it has never been disputed by any section of Indian opinion that does not dispute the legitimacy of the paramount power itself. This is not an open question, and if two men are not able to wield one sceptre, it is idle to dissemble the fact in constructing political machinery." Masters of trenchant phrases sometimes would do well to count the cost of their gift; and this brilliant but unlucky epigram about two men and one sceptre has done much to rouse the suspicions of the people against the Government proposals. We knew it without being told in so many words, that the sceptre was in the hands of a very powerful class which, so far as it lies within its power, would never allow us to touch it. But what has the legitimacy of the paramount power to

do with the principle of a standing official majority in the Councils? Who has accepted it? Who ever said that it was not an open question? The National Congress for the last 23 years has disputed it, and has declared its adherence to a different principle. No responsible English or Anglo-Indian statesman ever said that the Congress disputed the legitimacy of the paramount power in India, Colonial parliaments do not dispute the legitimacy of the paramount power; but the British minister is not yet born who would declare before them the principle of a standing official majority in the name of the legitimacy of England's overlordship, (Cheers.) I say it is darkening counsel to talk of a standing official majority as a necessary consequence of British supremacy in India. You keep the executive Government entirely in your hands; you give us purely a consultative voice in the Legislative Councils which, under all circumstances, will be strongly manned by officials, and yet you talk of a standing official majority as an eternal and divine institution which no profane hand can touch. (Cheers.) If the whole Council of the Viceroy were composed of Indians only and of no others, the principle of British paramountcy would remain unimpaired. (Hear, hear.) But why should we deal with hypothetical cases? Let us take the facts as they are. Here you have a Council in which a considerable proportion will be official, some will be nominated members, some will be representatives of English interests; in which the elected members will be Hindu, Mahomedan, Parsi, Sikh, and Christian. Is it supposed that in such a Council, unless there were a standing official majority, all the other sections will combine together to defeat or embarrass the Government? The power of initiation in all matters of Legislation and administration is in the hands of the Viceroy and his Executive Council, he is also invested with the power of veto; is it supposed that in spite of these checks and safeguards, the elected members



could do anything to weaken British paramountcy in India? I can understand the principle of a standing majority for Government in Parliament. There if you break up the ministerial majority you break up the ministry; and some other party representing the majority takes its place. There it is the Government which owes its existence to the majority and not the majority to the Government. Here the case is quite different. Here the official majority does not make the Government, but the Government makes the official majority. Then although the Government is not bound by the vote of the majority, yet the officials are bound to vote with the Government. Upon every measure everybody knows beforehand that whichever way the non-official members may vote, the official vote will be cast on the side of Government. The votes of officials who are paid to vote with Government have no moral value in the public eye. For nobody believes that a certain measure was passed because the majority supported it; but everybody knows that the majority supported it because it was bound to do so; and, therefore, the public always hold the Executive Government wholly and solely responsible for any and every measure that it may choose to pass. The farce of a standing official majority deceives nobody now, and will deceive nobody in the proposed enlarged Councils. What, therefore, is the good of taking away a number of officials from their work, and putting them in the Councils with the sole object—for no other object can be imagined or has been alleged—of out-voting the non-official members? If the Viceroy were supported by 50 official members against 5 non-official, his decision would carry no more weight with the public than if he were supported by 5 official members against 50 non-official; for he alone would be responsible for the decision and not his official supporters. This is the real situation, and the Government ought to face it with courage and frankness. Have a certain number of officials, a certain number of nominated members; and let at least a half of the

Council be composed of elected members. This will enable a larger number of Indians to enter the Councils, and take away a smaller number of officials from their regular work. The power of the Executive Council will remain unimpaired; the Viceroy's veto will remain unaffected; the farce of a packed and spurious official majority will be done away with; and the responsibility of the Viceroy and his Executive Council will stand in a clearer light than it does now before the public.

Let me now go on to the second point, namely, the cutting down the proportion of the educated classes in the Councils. Hitherto we have been told that we were not fit to be admitted largely into the Councils, because we were not educated enough, because there were not enough competent and able men to participate in the administration of the country. Now we are told that our education has given us too much power, that educated and able Indians have become too numerous and "obtained a virtual monopoly of the power exercised by the Councils," and that, therefore, there should be supplied the requisite "counterpoise" to this excessive power of the educated classes.

The Government say that "it is admitted" that during the last 14 years the District Boards and Municipalities have returned an overwhelming majority of lawyers to the Councils, at the cost of the more important classes and interests in the land. Admitted by whom? By the landed classes, to whose great political importance and great political capacity the Government has become suddenly alive? No, the landed classes have made no complaint against the result of past elections. The landed classes may not be men of very high education; but they have common sense enough to know what work, in their present state of culture, they are fit for and what they are not. They know that much of the Council work requires a certain amount of liberal education and a certain amount of

legal knowledge. They know that the interests of the educated classes are not at variance with theirs; they also know from practical experience that the Indian members have been true to their trust, that they have fought for the landed interests as boldly and persistently as for any other interests. Upon this point I entirely associate myself with the observations of Raja Rampal Singh of Kori-Sidhauli in his note upon the subject. Then I do not accept the accuracy of the figures relied upon by the Government to show that the legal element predominates in the Councils. A good proportion of these legal men comprises those who are landholders. Take your own Provincial Council. Of the four members elected by the District and Municipal Boards three at least are landholders. Two of the nominated members are landholders; of course I must admit that three out of the eight non-official members have the misfortune to be lawyers. The Indian member who represents the Provincial Council in the Imperial Council is a landlord and banker, and is not a lawyer. The gentleman who in previous years represented these provinces in the Imperial Council, is a Talukdar although unfortunately he happens to be also a distinguished member of the local bar. Now, what becomes of the preponderance of lawyers in our Provincial Council? The least that can be said is that it was an oversight on the part of Government that they did not bear in mind the composition of our Provincial Council while parading their misleading figures before the public. (Cheers.) But, gentlemen, admitting that to some extent the lawyer element in the Councils is larger than its numerical strength justifies; still I say that considering their training, the function they have to discharge in the Council, the work of the Councils and the peculiar political circumstances of the country—that fact needs no apology; for I believe that the claim of the instructed to represent their less instructed brethren rests upon a foundation which even the Indian Government would not like to see weakened. At present you have—to a

very limited extent I admit, but still to some extent—the country represented in the Councils by men of education, intelligence, and independence, men whose aims and ideals are high and liberal, and bear the impress of the progressive spirit of the West; do the Government think that they have got too much knowledge, too much progressive spirit, too much independence in the Councils; that by introducing a little more of oriental ways of thought and action, of Indian conservatism, of Indian dread of new light, of Indian subservience to the powers that be, they would improve the situation; do they think that by mixing the white of knowledge with the black of ignorance they would be able to produce the neutral tints of an ideal Indian constitution? (Cheers.) Let it not be understood that I wish in any way to minimise the importance of the landed classes. By all means give the franchise to the landed classes, the more intelligent sections of them do most certainly deserve it. But deal with them fairly and squarely. Give them the franchise to elect whom they please, not whom you please. (Cheers.) Why should you bind them to return members of their own class? Why should you take away from them the liberty to elect anybody whom they think best, to whatever class of society he may belong? There is no rational principle that I am aware of upon which this sort of representation can be defended. But one thing it undoubtedly indicates, thinly veiled as it is by fine phrases about the political importance of the landed classes, and as it is sometimes good to call a spade a spade, I would take the liberty of saying that by having a good number of landlords—ignorant, stolid, conservative, servile to Government—a sufficient “counterpoise” will be found against the turbulent and troublesome representative of the professional and ~~ad-~~ educated classes, and so by yoking together a horse and a bullock to the Government cart they would be able to moderate its speed. (Hear, hear.) I have read the Government

scheme very carefully, and I sympathise very much its solicitude for the political representation of the landed classes; but to my great disappointment, I have failed to find one word said on behalf, of the poor peasant who after all, forms the backbone of the Indian community. Who is going to represent him in the Councils? Surely the Indian Government, which has passed a number of Tenancy Acts—good, bad and indifferent—will not say it will leave them to be represented by the landlords. I am not saying anything in disparagement of the landlords; I am simply testing the effusive professions of Government by its practice. Under the pretence of giving representation to this class and that class, nothing is meant but to crush what little power and influence the educated classes possess in the country. For remember that in the Viceregal Council of 54 members including the Viceroy 29 will be officials. Out of the remaining 25 members seven will be elected by the Provincial Councils and may be taken as representing the educated classes, seven will be nobles and gentlemen, and is not that two will represent the Chambers of Commerce, Calcutta, and will of course be Europeans; four nominated members, not less than two of whom will be Mahomedans; two experts and one ruling chief. As those figures stand the educated classes are in a low depth already; but if they look into them a little more closely they will find that they are in a yet lower deep. Apparently they are seven; let them only see that out of these seven one will be from East Bengal, and we know what sort of representative he will be; one will be from Burma and will be virtually an official nominee; and so, although some may go on saying with the little girls in Wordsworth's poem that "we are seven", as a matter of fact we shall be only five. (Laughter and loud cheers.) Is this the proportion which the Government is going to assign to the knowledge and intelligence of the whole country? Is the man an "impatient idealist" who persists like Oliver Twist in asking for some

more? Is this the way of "rallying the moderates" on the side of Government? Mr. Morley and Lord Minto are mistaken—sadly mistaken—if they think that such niggardly doles of concessions will satisfy the Indian demand. We cannot be grateful to those who will not be generous to us. (Cheers.)

But, gentlemen, while I have hitherto drawn your attention to some very harmful proposals contained in the Government letter, the most mischievous of them still remains; and that is the principle of racial and class representation which is intended to be introduced not only into our Legislative Councils, but also into our Local and Municipal Boards. The principle of territorial representation which at present obtains, is proposed to be set aside and why? Has it proved a failure? Will anybody tell me that the members elected under the existing system have, on the whole, been not representative men? Was the late Mr. Sayani of Bombay not a representative man? Is Moulvi Serajul-Islam of Bengal not a representative man? Is not the Madras Presidency well represented by Nawab Syed Mohammad? Are Mr. Gokhale, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh not representative men? I cannot follow the working of the minds of those who, be they Indians or Englishmen, are crying for class, caste, and religious representation. Are Councils intended for castes to fight out their battles there? Are they to be turned into a battle ground for the various religions flourishing in the country? Do the material and political interests of India rest upon caste, religions and racial distinctions? The questions of taxation and famine; of land revenue, of military expenditure and home charges, of commerce and industry of education and sanitation, do not affect any particular caste, sect, religion or race; they affect all classes. Will any body tell me how a special repre-

sentation of Mohomedans or a special representation of Hindus is necessary to safeguard our general interests in respect of those questions? Can anybody point out to me, when, ever since the Legislative Councils came into existence, any law has been passed by which any section of the Indian community has suffered, because some particular section happened to be over-represented in the Councils? Gentlemen, I entirely repudiate and reject the principle of class and religious representation. One of the chief evils against which every form of representative system has to guard itself is the growth of sinister interests, that is to say, the interests of any particular class as opposed to the general interests of the community. The Legislative Council does not exist for the representation of peculiar or sinister interests of a class. It is, a national Council, and exist, for the representation of the general interests of the nation. Indeed, the great aim of a national Council ought to be to keep out sinister interests, and to admit the representation only of such interests as are in harmony and not in conflict with the interests of other classes comprising the nation. It is impossible to give class representation and not to create sinister interests. You at once turn the people's mind not upon general national interests but upon the narrow selfish interests that divide the community. The Brahman\* will want to get into the Council not because he is an Indian but because he is a Brahman; so will the Mahomedan, so will the Christian. He will have every inducement to think of his class first and of his country afterwards. It must be so whether he is elected by a special electorate or by a general electorate. In the case of a special electorate, the temptation to a man to court the pleasure of his particular class is obvious; for India is not the only place on this planet where to please a class you must make its particular interests the

\* The present attitude of the non-Brahmins in Madras is a case in point.—*Editor.*

first object of your care and concern. (Cheers.) If he is to be elected by a mixed constituency, the evil will to some extent be obviated; but it will not be removed; for if the mixed constituency is composed of such classes as are indifferent to politics and have not developed public spirit in any considerable degree, and are content to leave others to go their way if they are allowed to go theirs, then each class will select its member on lines of purely selfish and class interests; but if any section of the constituency is active and ambitious, its first aim would be to return such members of the other less active or advanced sections as it would think useful for its own sectional purposes, and would practically take the election of these members into its own hands. Class representation is a meaningless phrase if it does not mean the representation of class interests; and to ask people to represent their class interests in a National Council, but to represent them only within certain legitimate bounds and with due regard to other and more general interests, is as visionary a dream as has ever flitted through the brains of a Utopian philosopher. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, in my humble opinion no political constitution is worth anything if it is not also an instrument of National Education; and there is no Education which the Indian people need more than that which would teach them that they are one people and not many, that their interests are one and the same, that they are sharers of a common fortune, engaged in a common cause, pursuing a common goal, actuated by feelings of a common and national patriotism which transcends all sectional lines and embraces within its fold the destinies of a composite but United race. (Loud cheers.) It is the growth of a national spirit, as opposed to the spirit of caste and sect, that India stands most in need of. It is because we believe that representative institutions, however narrow their basis and scope, however hedged and fenced round with checks and limitations, would tend to foster,



diffuse and develop that spirit, by raising our people above the narrow circle of their petty class and sectarian interests, and by teaching them to take a wider and more comprehensive view of public matters, that we demand a yet larger expansion of the Legislative Councils, a yet wider franchise to secure representation in these Councils. (Cheers.) It is because the principle of class and religious representation is at variance with the growth and development of the sentiment of Indian nationality, and will, if adopted, throw the whole country into confusion and disorder, and yet more markedly sharpen and deepen our existing caste and religious differences, that we unhesitatingly repudiate and condemn it. It is impossible to disguise from ourselves the fact that the one certain result of the adoption of the principle, as laid down in the Government letter, will be to sow seeds of discords and dissensions between Hindus and Mahomedans. I do not mean to say that the existing relations between the two communities are of the happiest.\* But the Government scheme will not tend to improve them. I do not forget that there is a section of the Mahomedan community that has pronounced its blessings over the scheme. My relations with Mahomedans generally have been so happy, and I have so many friends among them whose great qualities I sincerely admire and whose good opinion I deeply value, that I hope I will not be misunderstood when I say that the policy of isolation is a mistaken policy, and that even Government patronage will have been obtained at too high a price if it cost them the sympathy and good will of their Hindu brethren. Let not the Mahomedans be deceived by the swing of the pendulum in their favour. The Government clock is so well-constructed that it will swing back the other way as well. (Laughter and loud cheers.) They have only to see how the nationalist aspirations of their co-religionists in Egypt are treated by

\* The bridge which has in recent times been hastily thrown over the chasm on very slender props—*Editor.*

their English friends ; and that might give them some idea as to how their own claims would be treated when they have grown sufficiently strong and independent and are able to stand without the crutches of official support.\* (Cheers.) There are enlightened Mahomedans as there are enlightened Hindus who believe that our political advancement, and progress lies not in the hands of the dominant class but in our own hands. They know that no one community can effect single-handed the amelioration of our national fortunes. Both of us, Hindus and Mahomedans, must put ourselves on our own guard against dividing and disintegrating influences. The provision about the protection of the Mahomedan minority is a delusion and a snare. The Government reserves two or three seats for the Mahomedans, the rest it places at the disposal of the mixed constituencies ; that is to say, constituencies dominated by Hindu majorities. What can the Mahomedans expect from the Hindus, if by clamouring for a special electorate for themselves, they cut themselves off from the Hindu electors ? If the Government mean to give special representation to the Mahomedans, let them say so plainly and provide for that representation honestly. Let them say what proportion of Mahomedans they want in the Councils, and provide for that proportion. We do not want any provision of the sort ; and it is not for us, therefore, to say what that proportion should be. It is for Government to announce that proportion. Hindus and Mahomedans are both interested parties. They cannot properly decide this question. (Hear, hear) The temper of the time is such that perhaps the proposals of neither party would be fairly considered by the other. The Government stands as a dispenser of impartial justice between the two. Let it publicly announce to what respective shares it thinks each of the is two entitled. At any rate, we,

\* Little did Mr. Dar dream that within a short decade some leaders would come forward to repudiate all kinds of official patronage and concentrate their efforts to undermine British rule itself.—*Editor.*

Hindus and Mahomedans, ought not to make ourselves responsible for the inevitable consequences of such announcement.

Gentlemen, there are several other matters of considerable importance relating to discussions on Budgets, the right of interpellation, &c., contained in the Resolution which is now before the Conference. But I have taken up so much of your time already that I cannot even touch them.

I would, however like to say one word before I conclude. We are at the dawn of a great national awakening in India. The valley of dry bones is beginning to stir with a new life, The Indian mind, so long torpid and inert, is rising from the rust and dust of ages, and is beginning to put forward claims which the advance of education has made inevitable, and which are in perfect consonance with the sentiments of the whole civilised world. Those claims cannot long be resisted. They cannot be put off by such delusive measures as the Government propose to introduce. Our ideal is not Anglo-Indian despotism ; it is not sham Councils, resting upon a sham representation, working in the interests of the dominant caste. Our ideal is self-government within the Empire, self-government on colonial lines such as is the birth-right of every British subject in every part of the globe, (Cheers.) In the realisation of that ideal lies the safety of the Empire. (Hear, hear.) Perhaps the time is nearer than many people suppose when that ideal will be realised. The signs of the times are unmistakable. At any rate, whatever may happen, one thing is certain: the present system of Government which is official-ridden and is unsympathetic, which places no trust in the people, which is exclusive, arbitrary, and despotic, under which our national life can never expand and our true progress can never be assured—the days of such a system, I say, are numbered, and the hand-

writing is already on the wall. Self-government within the Empire—that is the ultimate goal of all our endeavours. The light of justice and right illumines the path that leads to that goal. Guided by that divine light we cannot go astray. I know the dangers that lie across that path. I know our bark is cast upon dark and troubled waters. The voyage will be stormy, there are rocks and breakers ahead. But before us there shines the beacon star, and by that star let us steer our course. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

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## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS DELIVERED AT CALCUTTA IN 1911.

BROTHER-DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I thank you most sincerely for the signal honour you have conferred upon me by electing me as your President. The presidency of the National Congress, it has been rightly observed, is the highest honour which it is within your power to bestow upon any of your countrymen. In my case it is also unprecedented, because your generosity has conferred it upon one who is not a prominent figure in the public life of the country, and is not known to fame, who has by a chronic illness been disabled from taking any active part in the great work in which you are engaged, and has been living in the solitude of the Himalayan hills for the last six years—watching, no doubt, with deep interest your noble and patriotic struggle, but unfit to take part in the fray. To me, therefore, the high office which by your generous suffrage I have been called upon to fill is not only a matter of the highest personal gratification, but it is more, for I take it as an honour conferred upon the province to which I belong. I believe I am expressing the unanimous sentiment of this assembly when I say how happy should we all have been to-day to have Mr. Ramsay Macdonald as our President, had not a most cruel bereavement prevented him from fulfilling the engagement he had so kindly made with you. The untimely death of Mrs. Macdonald, an irreparable loss to him, has saddened us all, for we know how, like her distinguished husband, she was deeply interested in everything that concerned the welfare of India, and her chapters on the position of Indian women in her husband's remarkable book on "The Awakening of India" give some indication of her keen womanly insight into the life of her Indian sisters and her touching sympathy with their lot. I beg to offer Mr. Macdonald, on your behalf and on mine,

our deepest and sincerest sympathies in the sad and cruel bereavement that has made his hearth desolate. Gentlemen, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald is one of that band of noble-minded and philanthropic Englishmen whose liberal sympathies and humanitarian sentiments are not bounded by race or clime, who love justice and hate wrong as much in India as in their own country, and to whose silent and unobtrusive but active and sleepless moral influence, we Indians owe many blessings which are never recorded in Government documents. Mr. Macdonald's interest in Indian questions has always been keen, intelligent and sympathetic, as even his Anglo-Indian detractors admit; and to such prejudiced presentation of the Indian case as is supplied by Mr. Chirol's book on "Indian Unrest," there is no better antidote in my opinion, than "The Awakening of India." He is one of the leaders of British democracy, which in the last resort is the arbiter of our destinies, and it is a source of inward strength and hope to us all that he and several of his able colleagues are so sympathetically and generously disposed towards India, and are always so prompt in pleading on our behalf before their nation and their Parliament. Freaks of fortune are proverbial; and I assure you that nobody was more astonished than myself that in the unavoidable absence of such an able, experienced and influential English politician, I should have been called upon to preside over the deliberations of this great national assembly. The honour, as I have already said, is great, but the duty which it imposes upon me is equally great. If I had relied upon my own ability and experience, I should never have dared to accept it; but trusting to the help and guidance of the merciful Providence and to your prayer for the success of the great work in which we all are engaged, I have come forward to obey your call.

Before I proceed any further, it is my sad duty to express our sincere grief for the heavy loss we have sustained this year by the disappearance from the stage of our public life of some of the best and most illustrious figures of our day. The sudden and premature death of the late Nizam of Hyderabad is justly mourned throughout the whole country, because he was one of those two or three Indian Princes whose names are heard in every Indian household and whose just and enlightened methods compare favourably, in some respects, even with those of the British Government. The late Nizam was a Prince who knew no race or religious distinction in the work of government; his justice was equal as between Hindus and Mahomedans, his bounty was impartial to all. His remarkable letter to Lord Minto on the subject of 'sedition' contains principles of wise and generous statesmanship, not unworthy even of the best English statesmen who have ever ruled the Indian Empire.

By the death of Sir Charles Dilke, England has lost a staunch and sagacious liberal statesman of world-wide human sympathies, and India a wise, generous and true-hearted friend. We of the Congress can never forget his invaluable services to the cause of Indian economy and of equal justice for India. He was a tower of strength to us in Parliament, and would have come out to attend the Allahabad Congress last year, if he had not been prevented by the parliamentary situation of the time. We mourn his loss, but his memory will always remain enshrined in our hearts

From the field of Indian journalism and public life have passed away two most honoured and prominent figures—Babu Norendro Nath Sen and Babu Shishir Kumar Ghosh. Norendro Nath Sen was a remarkable personality in every way; and whether we approved or disapproved of

his views upon any public question, we always felt that we were in the presence of a man transparently honest, scrupulously just to the views of others, liberal to the core, but hating gush and exaggeration—a man of immovable convictions and unquenchable faith in the future of his country.

Babu Shishir Kumar Ghosh is another great name in the same field. His activities perhaps were not so varied as those of Mr. Sen, and not quite so widely known in the remoter parts of India, but within the sphere to which he confined his energies, he wielded a potent influence, and the charm of his passionate religious faith was felt by a whole generation of the people of Bengal. The passing away of these two memorable figures from the arena of our public life is a national loss, but they have left behind them noble memories to inspire the hearts and guide the steps of the younger generation.

And now, gentlemen, it is my most pleasant duty to refer to a happy incident in the life of the Congress, namely, the gracious reception by our Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, of the Congress deputation headed by Sir William Wedderburn in the beginning of last January. That act of kindness and grace was universally appreciated and applauded at the time, and will always be gratefully remembered by the people.

Gentlemen, my first duty as well as my proudest privilege as your President to-day is to tender on behalf of this great assembly and all those whom it represents, a most loyal and heart-felt homage and welcome to their most gracious Majesties King-Emperor George V and Queen-Empress Mary, on their coming visit to this great city—the first city of their Eastern Empire. The visit of a British Sovereign to his great Eastern Dominion is a unique event in our history, and has sent a thrill of joy and gratitude



through the length and breadth of this ancient land, but the memory of the acts of splendid beneficence that have marked that visit will never pass away from the hearts of the Indian people. The great Coronation Darbar held at Delhi was a spectacle of unprecedented magnificence ; but the beneficence of the Sovereign was even greater ; for the boons he has conferred upon the whole country are worthy of one who wears the Crown of Victoria the Good, whose great Proclamation of 1858 is the charter of our liberties, and Edward the Peace-maker, whose royal messages of 1903 and 1908 are our most precious national possessions - one who as Prince of Wales on a memorable occasion struck the golden note of sympathy in England's dealings with India, and who as their King-Emperor addressing the loyal Princes and faithful people of India at Delhi assured them of his affection for them and said, " I rejoice to have this opportunity of renewing in my own person those assurances which have been given you by my revered predecessors, of the maintenance of your rights and privileges, and of my earnest concern for your welfare, peace and contentment. May the Divine favour of Providence watch over my people and assist me in my utmost endeavour to promote their happiness and prosperity." Gentlemen, these precious words have been immediately followed by unprecedented measures of beneficence and genuine regard for the welfare of the Indian people, which have touched their imagination and forged fresh bonds of affection between India and England, which no calamity can sever and no misfortune can dissolve.

The Royal boons not only are a proof of British justice and benevolence ; they show that the old order is changing, giving place to something new and better, that the Supreme Government is determined to rule us according to its best and noblest traditions, and that if we appeal to it in a just cause, and convince it by our persistent and patriotic en-

deavours that we are earnest and sincere, it will never fail to respond to our appeal. The greatest wound in the heart of India was the partition of Bengal—a most unwise and unfortunate measure of a reactionary Viceroy—a measure which more than anything else contributed to the general unrest of recent years, which inflicted a grievous wrong upon the Bengali race and helped to implant those feelings of racial and religious antagonisms between Hindus and Mahomedans which we all deplore, and which have given rise to some most unfortunate troubles in the administration of the country. The leaders of Bengal from the very beginning had warned the Government against the evils that were sure to follow in the track of that ill-starred measure, but for years these warnings were addressed to deaf ears. Still they did not lose faith in the just instincts of their rulers, and their faith has at last been justified. Lord Hardinge's Government, whose despatch to the Secretary of State dated the 25th August, 1911, is a document that will live in our history, realised the justice of the anti-partition agitation and expressed his views in some remarkable passages of that most remarkable despatch. "Various circumstances" says the despatch, "have forced upon us the conviction that the bitterness of feeling engendered by the partition of Bengal is very widespread and unyielding"; "that the resentment among the Bengalis in both provinces of Bengal ..... is as strong as ever"; that though the opposition to the partition was at first based mainly on sentimental grounds, yet since the enlargement of the Legislative Councils on a representative basis the grievance of the Bengalis "has become much more real and tangible and is likely to increase instead of to diminish." "Every one with any true desire for the peace and prosperity of this country must wish to find some manner of appeasement if it is in any way possible to do so." Among the many evils of the partition Lord Hardinge's Government point out, one is "that it is in part at

any rate, responsible for the growing estrangement which has now unfortunately assumed a very serious character in many parts of the country between Hindus and Mahomedans." Recognising these serious evils Lord Hardinge's Government recommended to the Secretary of State the annulment of the Bengal partition, and so it has come to pass that our most gracious Sovereign on the advice of the two distinguished and generous-hearted statesmen who are at the head of the Indian administration, has reversed that measure, and in place of that, given the Bengalis a United Presidency under a Governor in Council, a boon for which not only Bengal but the whole of India is most deeply grateful to his Majesty; for the cause of Bengal is the cause of all India, and its triumph marks the triumph of the claims of justice over those of prestige, and will go far to strengthen our faith in the efficacy of constitutional agitation, carried on in a loyal and law-abiding spirit under British rule. Bengal waged a brave struggle against a great army, and it has won a great victory. The victory is due to the justice and righteousness of our rulers, but it is also due to the heroic courage and self-sacrifice of those patriotic leaders who, through all the storm that raged round them and the clouds of sorrow and suffering that darkened their path,

"Saw the distant gates of Eden gleam

And did not dream it was a dream,"\*

who retained an undying faith in their cause, and an immovable trust in British justice, and who have at last succeeded in the most momentous constitutional struggle of modern India, and have thereby set an inspiring example to the whole nation.

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\* Tennyson's *Two Voices*.

The first line of the stanza runs thus:

"Who rowing hard against the stream"—*Editor*.

The transfer of the political capital of the Government of India from Calcutta to Delhi is an announcement even more striking and more far-reaching in its effects upon our national fortunes. Delhi is the eternal city of Hindustan, and is associated with the most glorious and romantic memories of both Hindu and Mahomedan times, and the high honour which has been conferred upon it by our King-Emperor will be most deeply appreciated by millions of his subjects. Calcutta will not lose its importance, for that lies in the wealth, culture and public spirit of its people, who will retain their eminent position in future as befits their remarkable qualities, while a new life will spring up in the ancient and historic city of Delhi. And great and noble as are the monuments of her past splendour, yet greater and nobler monuments will arise, not to dim but to add to that splendour, by associating it with the bounty and beneficence of one of the noblest sovereigns that historic India has ever known.\*

Gentlemen, in mental and moral endowments, the people of Upper India are not inferior to the people of any other Indian province; but the social and political conditions obtaining there have in a great measure tended to obstruct their progress, and some years will elapse before we can expect to see that public life there which we see in our Presidency towns. For some years, undoubtedly, the new capital will not be able to show that political activity for which Calcutta is justly famous, and its public opinion cannot perhaps carry anything like the same weight; but when it becomes the seat of the Supreme Government, and new institutions spring up there, as in course of time they must,

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\* Mr. B N. Basu, Chairman of the Congress Reception Committee, struck a different note and quoting the famous lines from Marlowe's *Faust* applied them to Calcutta :—

"Fairer than the evening air  
Clad in a thousand stars"—*Editor.*

and men from the four quarters of the globe are drawn to it for business or pleasure, and it becomes the theatre of important political actions, a new spirit will arise among its inhabitants, which spreading beyond its limits will carry its contagion to the Punjab on the one side and the United Provinces on the other, and may, as the years roll by, be expected to send a vivifying thrill through the veins of the feudal system of the Indian States. A great future lies before Delhi, and through her influence, before the whole of Upper India; and it is my firm belief that the cause of Indian nationalism which owes so much to the people of Bengal, will gain, not lose, by the establishment of conditions under which the Hindustanis and the Punjabis will be induced to shake off their sloth and enter with zest and vigour in the larger, wider, and more stirring life of the new times.

As a necessary consequence of the momentous changes to which I have just referred, Behar, with Chota Nagpur and Orissa, has been given a Lieutenant-Governor with an Executive Council and a Legislative Council, which is a most wise and most generous concession to the best public opinion of that important and rising province, and has been hailed with gratitude throughout all India. Indeed in that concession the United Provinces, the Punjab, and the Central Provinces detect a happy augury for their own future. Self-government on a wider, more popular and more independent basis is the chief note of the Royal boons; Lord Hardinge's liberal and broad-minded statesmanship is the surest pledge and guarantee that the policy of autonomy will be pursued in every province and that Executive and Legislative Councils will be set up where they do not exist at present. The Central Provinces cannot remain long without a Lieutenant-Governor and a Council, nor the Punjab without an Executive Council. The claim of the United Provinces to have an

Executive Council is so strong and has been so persistently urged by the unanimous voice of the people that but for the present Lieutenant-Governor\* who apparently favours a more autocratic and less constitutional system of government, it would have been conceded long ago. But it is reasonable to hope that it will be conceded before long under a new and liberal-minded Lieutenant-Governor. My hope is strengthened by the spontaneous concession to Behar of council-government which, I feel sure, may be taken as a pledge that the older United Provinces for which such government was promised long years ago, will very soon have an Executive Council. May I not also express the hope that the United Provinces, which now is the first of all the provinces in population while it is second to none in importance, may not have to wait long for a Governor sent out from England †?

The generous grant to popular education will be deeply appreciated not only by the educated classes but also by the masses, for in her present condition India needs nothing more urgently than that the light of knowledge should penetrate her households, and the King's interest in her intellectual advancement, of which the Durbar boon is only an earnest, is a message of hope to our reformers who are trying so nobly to lay the foundations of mass education in India. The boon conferred upon the Indian army cannot fail to send a thrill of joy and thankfulness through the hearts of one of the most loyal and devoted class of his gracious Majesty's Indian subjects, and we are justified in hoping that before long higher ranks in the military service will be opened to the Indian people. There are other acts of clemency and generosity for which the King's visit will be for ever memorable. The Indian people have seen their Sovereign, and have been enabled to appreciate his boundless

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\* Sir John Hewett—*Editor*.

† Hope fulfilled in 1920—*Editor*.

generosity, his deep and touching regard for their true welfare, his great justice and his mercy which is even greater. Gentlemen, loyalty to their sovereign is innate in the Indian people of all colours and creeds ; it is enjoined by their religion and is one of the basic principles of their morality ; and it flows naturally, spontaneously, and without measure and stint towards a monarch who is just, merciful, benevolent and magnanimous. Queen Victoria was the first British sovereign who by her own personal influence united India and England by ties of sympathy and affection ; King Edward strengthened those ties still further ; and now King Emperor George V and his most noble Queen have shown by their visit that India is as dear to them as England, that the two nations are comrades in a common cause, and entitled to equal opportunities in their endeavours to realise a common destiny. May they live long to rule over a happy and prosperous Empire !

Gentlemen, we have met to day on a most auspicious occasion—the eve of the King's visit to this great city—which is likely to make this sitting of the Congress a most memorable one. While about to review the present political situation, that visit brings most vividly before my mind, as I have no doubt it does before the minds of all of you, the countless blessings we enjoy under British rule—special-ly the last fifty years of our direct connection with the British Crown have been marked by great and lasting benefits to the Indian people.

Peace, order and perfect security of life and property have been secured to us to a degree never known to the old Roman Empire, and even now not to be seen anywhere beyond the limits of the British Empire. A genuine and an active interest in the welfare of the masses, as is shown by its famine, plague, sanitation and agrarian measures, is its abiding and noblest feature. Perfect religious and social

freedom it has given us unasked ; and Railways, Telegraphs, Post Office and a thousand other instruments and appliances are the means by which it has added to our material comfort and social advancement. The educational system which has immortalised the names of Bentinck and Macaulay is perhaps its greatest gift to the people of India. The spread of English education, as it has instructed our minds and inspired us with new hopes and aspirations, has been accompanied by gradual and cautious concessions of political rights—the admission of Indians into the public service, the introduction of local self-government, and the reform of the Legislative Councils on a partially representative basis. We have a government whose justice is exemplary and a civil service which in ability, integrity, zeal, and genuine regard, according to its own lights, for those entrusted to its care, has no rival in the world. When I think of the dependencies ruled by other European powers—of Algeria and Tonquin under the French, of parts of Africa under the Germans—of the large negro populations in the United States, as the republican Americans treat and govern them—I thank God that I am a British subject, and feel no hesitation in saying that the government of India by England—faulty as it is in many respects, and greatly as it needs to be reformed and renovated from top to bottom—is still the greatest gift of Providence to my race; for England is the only country that knows how to govern those who cannot govern themselves.

Having said this much, I will not be misunderstood when I venture to point out that like many human institutions British rule in India has its defects and shortcomings—which are neither few nor slight—which it is well for its own sake as well as for ours that it should try to remove, and that it is the equal duty of both Indians and Englishmen to work and strive together for their removal. So far as it rests with Indians to discharge that great duty, it is



done by the Congress by its humble but earnest endeavours. For the last 26 years it has been telling the people what they owe to the British Government, and the British Government what it might do to make its rule even more beneficent than it is. But by a strange perversity of fate this organisation—national in its composition and loyal and patriotic in its aims—has been maligned, misrepresented, abused and ridiculed. The European community—official and non-official—boycotted the Congress from the beginning, the Anglo-Indian press made it a target for its scorn and contumely; and it was after it had passed through many ordeals and weathered many storms, but Lord Hardinge's wise statesmanship extended to it that friendly and sympathetic reception which it ought to have received a quarter of a century ago.

A new India has, however, arisen under the impact of western influences. We have learnt western modes of thought, western conceptions of liberty, western ideals of government; a wholesome discontent with the existing order of things has sprung up and a perfectly just dissatisfaction with many political evils and disabilities which are a relic of the past, and are discordant with the needs and aspirations of the present.

The root cause of most of our misfortunes, which if not corrected forebodes serious disasters in the future, is the growth of an unsympathetic and illiberal spirit in the bureaucracy towards the new-born hopes and ideals of the Indian people. While a new India has gradually been rising up, that spirit too has been growing, and so the critical situation has arisen on the one hand, the educated classes, filled with new knowledge and conscious of new political rights, but hampered by the bars and fetters of a system perhaps good enough for other days but now obsolete; on the other, the bureaucracy with its vested interests, its domineering habits,

its old traditions of obsolete and unquestioned authority, suspicious of knowledge and averse to innovation like every close corporation, cut off from the people by its racial exclusiveness, and wedded to a paternal system of government under which it has so long enjoyed power and pelf, but which is discordant with the mere liberal ideals of the present day.

The champions of the bureaucracy stoutly contest this statement and say, as Mr. Chirol does, that "the contrary is the case, for to him (the Anglo-Indian Civilian) belongs the credit of almost every measure passed during the last 50 years for the benefit of the Indian masses, and passed frequently in the teeth of vehement opposition from the Indian politician," and that he has always been sympathetic in dealing with the larger problems of Indian statesmanship. There is just that half-truth in this statement which so easily deceives the unwary. Undoubtedly Anglo-Indian officials have done great things for the people, undoubtedly some of them have been large-hearted and far-seeing statesmen. But the history of the last twenty-five or thirty years shows that, leaving out a few noble exceptions, as a body they have not been in sympathy with the new aspirations of educated India, which owes few of its political rights to their initiative and support. In Lord Ripon's time they opposed the Ilbert Bill which was introduced to establish some equality of criminal law as between Indians and Englishmen. They opposed his measure of local self-government, and although it was passed, yet they have succeeded (as Lord Morley acknowledged) in making it more or less ineffectual down to the present day. In Lord Dufferin's time the Congress was started, and their hostility to it has been notorious. Lord Lansdowne accepted the Indian Councils Act of 1892 because it was a too cautious measure, and the bureaucracy was unaffected by it. Lord Elgin proved a weak Viceroy, and the reactionary tendencies of the bureaucracy began to manifest themselves in a variety of ways. Lord Curzon adopted a

frankly narrow and autocratic policy, and was heartily supported by the bureaucracy. His educational policy dealt a severe blow to our higher education, and the bureaucracy blessed him. He flouted public opinion, treated the educated classes with marked contempt; proudly declared that he was opposed to all political concessions, treated the Queen's Proclamation as "an impossible charter", and he was praised. In order to break up the solidarity of the Bengali race, one of the most active and intelligent sections of his Majesty's Indian subjects, he devised 'the partition' scheme, in which he was most loyally supported by the bureaucracy. That fateful measure shook all India, and was not a little responsible for so many of our recent misfortunes. But when even Lord Curzon attempted once or twice to deal out even-handed justice between Indians and Englishmen, the Anglo-Indian community—official and not-official—became indignant, and he was made to feel his indiscretion. His rule created that situation which Lord Morley and Lord Minto had to face. Did the bureaucracy suggest that policy of reform with which these two statesmen set about to allay the discontent which the preceding administration had created or intensified? No; their advice was, coercion not conciliation. But Lord Minto realised the real nature of the Indian discontent and in Lord Morley he found even a more thorough-going reformer than himself. The bureaucracy, if not actively hostile, were certainly cool in the matter. The first draft scheme published by the Government of India was their handiwork and was at once condemned by the whole Indian public. Lord Morley transformed it into a more liberal and popular scheme, the bureaucracy mangled and mutilated it. The point, however, is that the policy of reform did not originate with them, on the contrary it was opposed by them. Even the President of that extremely loyal body, the Muslim League, was constrained to say at Nagpur

that "there can be little doubt that had Lord Morley relied chiefly on official sources of information, and looked at Indian affairs through official glasses only, we should in all probability have been landed in a terrible mess, if not actual disaster." But when Lords Morley and Minto were, under the pressure of certain circumstances, led to embark upon coercion, the bureaucracy supported them most heartily and cried for more coercion. The Muslim League found every encouragement to act as a counterpoise to the national movement, and virtually forced Lord Morley to introduce communal representation on the separatist principle into the Legislative Councils. It was not the bureaucracy who suggested the appointment of Indians to the Governor-General's Executive Council and the India Council. They are still opposed to our admission to the higher grades of the public service, and our local Government have already expressed their disapproval of free and compulsory primary education for India. When on the occurrence of certain abominable crimes, the cry for "martial law and no damned nonsense" arose in India, it was Lord Morley and not the bureaucracy who first called upon the Government "to rally the moderates" to its side; it was Lord Minto, and not the body of the Civil Service, who at once realised the legitimate character of Indian unrest and decided to meet it by measures of reform and conciliation. When the Calcutta High Court vindicated British justice in certain important political cases, the officials became restive and the note of alarm was sounded in the Anglo-Indian press. When Lord Hardinge passed the Seditious Meetings Act, against the best opinion of the country, he was heartily applauded by the Anglo-Indians: but when like a wise and far-seeing ruler, he relaxed the policy of coercion and put a stop to wholesale political prosecutions, they began to suspect his wisdom and firmness, and the *Times* came out with its warnings

and admonitions in the cause of law and order. And now that Lord Hardinge's Government have made "a pronouncement of one of the most weighty decisions ever taken since the establishment of British rule in India", "a bold stroke of statesmanship which would give unprecedented satisfaction, and will for ever associate so unique an event as the visit of the reigning Sovereign to his Indian dominions with a new era in the history of India", the Anglo-Indian community are pouring the vitriols of their wrath in the most undignified manner upon the devoted heads of our good Secretary of State and Viceroy.

I am sorry to have to say all this against a body of Englishmen whose ability, honesty and high sense of duty we all gladly acknowledge, but when exaggerated claims are made on their behalf, with the deliberate intent of disparaging the educated classes, it is necessary that the truth must be spoken out. And the truth is that a general distrust of the educated classes and an utter disregard of their opinions have unfortunately become the characteristic marks of Anglo-India.

The educated classes speak out and criticise Government measures freely, and their views are said to be selfish and at variance with the interests and sentiments of the general population. The masses are silent, and their silence is supposed to show their contentment with their lot and with everything that the Government does. This is a familiar method of disposing of opponents of an unpopular system. A governor who like Lord Curzon, does not want to make any reforms, says: "I am for the silent masses whom nobody represents except myself; the educated classes are a selfish lot and do not understand their countrymen." But there is another view which also deserves some consideration. The clamour of the educated classes means that those who are intelligent enough to understand British

rule are discontented with many of its acts, while those who are silent—are quite contented, if you will—are the ignorant masses. Surely a civilised Government has no reason to feel proud of this. Seeking refuge in the contentment of ignorance from the attacks of knowledge and intelligence is surely not an enviable position for the British Government to be placed in. To disparage the educated classes is to discredit western civilization, and to cast an unmerited suspicion upon the real justification of British rule in India. The policy of mistrust of the educated classes and antipathy to the new aspirations is responsible for the recent press legislation and other coercive measures.

It is true that Lord Minto came at a time when India was seething with unrest, due partly to general causes and partly to the unsympathetic and reactionary policy of Lord Curzon. He sowed the wind and Lord Minto had to reap the whirlwind. The unrest in some parts of Bengal and some other provinces took the form of anarchical crimes and sedition, and it became the duty of the Government to suppress it with a strong hand. So far it had the support of every sensible Indian; but its hands were forced by the panic-stricken Anglo-Indian community, and both Lord Morley and Lord Minto, while busy on the one hand with framing reform measures to allay public discontent, inaugurated, on the other hand a policy of coercion. The most loyal of their Indian supporters protested against it, but in vain. Deportations without trials, prosecutions for sedition, ordinances for the suppression of public meetings, prosecutions of schoolboys for their follies, became the order of the day. In justice to Lords Morley and Minto it must be said that at first they were slow to move, and when Sir Bampfylde Fuller insisted upon establishing a reign of terror in East Bengal, he had to go.

But the Anglo-Indian community grew impatient, and the cry for repressive measures became stronger than before.\* Lord Minto's Government set about suppressing seditious crimes by two methods—first, by passing repressive laws to curtail the liberty of the press and of public meetings; and secondly, by invoking the help and co-operation of Indian Chiefs. The wise advice “to rally the moderates” was forgotten, and the Government, instead of listening to such appeals as were made to them by Dr. Rashbehari Ghosh and Mr. Gokhale in the Imperial Council, turned to those who as a class are not noted for liberal political sentiments. The sight of the Government of India turning to Indian Chiefs for help in restoring peace and order in India by gagging the press and suppressing public meetings and deporting men without trial, reminds me of a story about St. Simon, the founder of a school of socialism, as to how he proffered himself in marriage to Madame de Stael. He said : “Madam, you are the most extraordinary woman in the world—I am the most extraordinary man. Between us, we should, no doubt, make a child more extraordinary still.” So probably thought the Government of India when it proposed to Indian Chiefs to unite with it, and by the happy union to produce some policy better than the unaided brains of either of the parties could produce. But when the Government of India was eager to devise repressive measures to put down Indian unrest, the late Nizam wrote a letter to Lord Minto, which must have caused deep searchings of the Anglo-Indian heart and which, coming from an Indian prince to an English Viceroy, is certainly one of the most remarkable documents of our time. On the point how the so-called sedition was to be combated the late Nizam said :

“The experience that I have acquired within the last 25 years in ruling my State encourages me to venture upon a

\* The bureaucracy is now singing the swan-song—*Editor.*

few observations which I trust will be accepted in the spirit in which they are offered. I have already said that my subjects are, as a rule, contented, peaceful and law-abiding. For this blessing I have to thank my ancestors. They were singularly free from all religious and social prejudices. Their wisdom and foresight induced them to employ Hindus and Mahomedans, Europeans and Parsis alike, in carrying on the administration, and they reposed entire confidence in their officers, whatever religion, race, sect or creed they belonged to. It is in a great measure to this policy that I attribute the contentment and well-being of my dominions."

The Government, however, was bent upon a different course at that time and adopted a series of repressive measures. An old Bengal Regulation was unearthed under which a number of persons were deported without trial. A stringent Press Act was passed last year. The late Sir Herbert Risley who was in charge of the measure explained to the Council what he meant by 'sedition' in India. According to him, to say that "the Government is foreign and therefore selfish"; that "it drains the country of its wealth and has impoverished the people"; that "it allows Indians to be ill-treated in British colonies"; that "it levies heavy taxes and spends them on the army",....."pays high salaries to Englishmen and employs Indians only in the worst paid posts", is sedition.

His statement is extremely interesting, for I fully believe it represents the views of Europeans in this country; and a good many Anglo-Indian magistrates would be too glad to interpret 'sedition' in the spirit of that statement. Even as it is, the Act adversely affected a large number of Indian papers, good, bad, and indifferent; and perhaps all live with the sword of Damocles hanging over their heads. The Executive has obtained a direct hold over the press, because it can demand heavy security from any paper,



and from this order there is no appeal to a court of law. If this is not discouraging free criticism, I do not know what is. It may be that good papers have no fear ; but the existence of a bad law is a standing menace to all, for it is the executive which sets the criterion of journalistic goodness. We can understand why the Anglo-Indian press and the Anglo-Indian community supported the Press Act. They know that they are quite safe ; they may abuse us to their heart's content, remind us of ' the tiger qualities ' of the ruling race\* call Lord Morley an accomplice of the murderer of Mr. Ashe ; but they know that no governor will have the temerity to call them to account for their conduct. Let the Anglo-Indian papers be treated under the Press Act as the Indian papers are treated, and it is my firm belief that either their violent writing against Indians will stop or the Act itself will cease to exist. Talk of Indian journalists spreading sedition, why, if I were an enemy of British rule, I would not write a line of my own, but translate articles from our Anglo-Indian papers and spread them broadcast among the people. There is no more potent cause of the strained relations between the rulers and the ruled than the growing sense in the Indian people that they are abused by a section of the Anglo Indian press and yet the Government would not take any notice of their writings. Will a statesman ever arise who will have the courage to put a stop to this evil ?

The Seditious Meetings Act is of a piece with the Press Act. If you gag the press, you cannot let free the platform. It was first passed as a temporary measure when sedition was said to be at its height in this country. In the beginning of this year, the close of which was to witness the King's visit, it was placed permanently upon the Statute-book. Like the Press Act, it was opposed by Indian opinion, and by some of the ablest and most experienced members

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\* Quoted from the editorial notes of the *Pioneer*—Editor.

of the Imperial Council. But it was passed; and the only thing that can be said for it is that Lord Hardinge's Government have removed some of its most objectionable features and kept it in abeyance. But the measure is on the Statute-book, and we cannot expect to have always a Lord Hardinge at the helm of the Government. Even in constitutionally governed countries it is the tendency of the executive to encroach upon the province of the judiciary; in a country governed as India is, the executive is always suspicious of every power not held directly from itself and not amenable to its arbitrary control. The weapons have been forged for the suppression of public opinion, and are in the arsenal of the Government of India. As soon as we have a Viceroy, who is not so wise and liberal-minded as the present Viceroy, and if at the same time we happen to have a Conservative Government in England, rest assured we shall feel the full effect of those weapons. This point is worthy of the consideration of the English people. For in the last resort it is the British democracy whose servant the Indian Government is, and for whose wise or unwise actions it is responsible.

But British democracy cannot properly supervise the work of its agents, if it is not kept well-informed of the real facts of the situation. It has channels enough through which it can receive official information, but the people's view of public questions it can have only through the agency of the press and the platform. If these avenues are closed to it, it is deprived of all power to exercise any wise and intelligent control over the Government here. And no greater calamity can befall India than that the check now exercised by British democracy through its Parliament over our affairs, should be slackened or removed. No one recognises this truth more fully than Lord Morley, and yet he is as much responsible for the repressive measures of our day as any one connected with the Government of India. He

has in many respects been the greatest Indian Secretary of State, but the stain of the policy of repressive will remain upon his otherwise glorious and beneficent administration.

But in spite of all these repressive measures there are signs on the horizon to show that our rulers are beginning to be alive to the needs and requirements of the new India, and the following remarkable passage in Lord Hardinge's great dispatch foreshadows some most important changes on popular lines which we may expect to take place in the existing system :—

“ Yet the country will have to be satisfied and the question will be how this devolution of power can be conceded without impairing the supreme authority of the Governor-General in Council. The only possible solution of the difficulty would appear to be gradually to give the province a larger measure of self-government, until at last India would consist of a number of administrations, autonomous in all provincial affairs, with the Government of India above them, and possessing power to interfere in case of misgovernment ; but ordinarily restricting the functions to matters of Imperial concern.” It is in the spirit of the above passage that the following criticisms on the Council Regulations are offered. The benefits of the reforms associated with the names of Lords Morley and Minto are, to my mind, quite obvious, and I, for one, can never bring myself to agree with those who minimize their importance or their beneficence. Compare the old and new Councils in point of the proportion of Indian members, the recognition of the elective principle, and their functions ; and the great step forward which has been taken becomes at once apparent. The Reforms are incomplete and in many respects are defective, and can never be considered final ; but they are substantial, and our sincerest gratitude is due to their authors. Our present complaint is against the

Regulations framed under the new Councils Act, which are extremely faulty, and in some important respects defeat the object of that Act. Lord Minto's Government made a great mistake in not consulting the public at the time of framing the Regulations. The Act was hailed with joy by the whole Indian people, but the Regulations courted a wide-spread disappointment. Lord Minto declared that the Regulations were tentative and would be amended in the light of experience.

But the Government of India's announcement made the other day that no substantial amendment of the Regulations was contemplated has filled the public mind with disappointment. If the announcement was intended to close all discussion of the question of amending the Regulations for the time being, then it is one against which this Congress will be perfectly justified in entering its respectful but most emphatic protest; for the Regulations are full of such glaring defect as amount to positive injustice to large classes of his Majesty's Indian subjects, defects which are calculated to turn the elective principle into a mockery and the enlarged functions into an illusion, which mar the beneficence of a great concession, and will, if not speedily corrected, prove detrimental to the best interests of the Government itself. But since there is to be a territorial redistribution necessitating a substantial modification of the Regulations I trust that the occasion will be utilised by the Government to remove atleast the more serious of their defects. And in this hope I now invite your attention to a brief examination of some of their most objectionable features.

First as to the principle of communal representation. That it is an innovation in the governmental system will, I hope, be readily admitted. But for the purpose of my argument, I assume its expediency under the present state of things, and contend only against the method of its application. India is unfortunately split up into many communities,

each of which is entitled to its proper share of representation and no sensible man has ever disputed this claim. But to secure representation in the Councils to every important community by a general electorate is one thing, and to secure it by its own communal and exclusive suffrage is quite another. While the former is a unifying agency which enables men of each community to co-operate with those of others in the common interest of the whole country, the latter is a disintegrating agency by which sectional interests come to claim the first regard of every member, and those difficulties and troubles arise which we notice in respect of the separate representation of Mahomedans and landlords.

I shall take up the Mahomedan case first. This is a delicate question, but those who know me, will, I hope, need no special assurance from me how deep and sincere is my regard for the great Mahomedan community; how much I regret the feelings of estrangement which have sprung up between the two communities in recent years; for, believing as I do, that the ultimate good of India lies in the union of both, it is the most cherished desire of my heart that this estrangement may be healed, and that some basis of compromise and accommodation may be found which may be honourable to both and detrimental to neither. I know what India owes to Mahomedans; I know what mark they have made in the world's history; I know how cordial have been our relations with them, how even now outside the dusty atmosphere of politics those relations remain undisturbed. It is, therefore, not to rake up old disputes, nor to cast any aspersions upon the Mahomedan community, but to state a case which needs to be frankly and honestly stated that I venture to place before you a few facts bearing upon the question of Mahomedan representation in the Legislative Council.

In the first draft scheme of the Government of India the principle of communal representation appeared in its

most extreme form. It was denounced by the whole country but approved by an influential section of the Mahomedans, who had interpreted a certain passage in Lord Minto's speech to All-India Mahomedan deputation, in their own way. Lord Morley transformed and liberalized that scheme—accepting the principle of communal representation on the basis of the numerical proportion of the Hindu and Mahomedan communities and of joint electorates for both. The Muslim League agitation arose, and demanded a separate electorate and excessive representation, mainly on the ground of 'historical importance.' The bureaucracy and the Anglo-Indian press in India, and the Tory press and some retired Anglo-Indian officials in England, supported this claim. Lord Morley reluctantly yielded to the opposition in the end, conceded to the Mahomedans both separate and excessive representation. Injustice was done to the Hindus, but they remained quiet. When the regulations were published, they realised for the first time how much they had lost by their silent trust in the authorities here.

They suffered not only injustice but indignity and humiliation at the hands of those who ought to have safeguarded their interests. Some local Governments were openly unsympathetic to the Hindus. In the United Provinces and the Punjab they were treated as the remnants of a disinherited race. Some of the most public-spirited Mahomedans have always sympathised with this grievance of the Hindus. The Hon. Mr. Mazharul Haque and Mr. Hasan Imam, who, I believe are as true Mahomedans as any in India and the former of whom is also an important member of the Muslim League, have always stood by us upon this question of the excessive representation of Mahomedans. Lord Macdonnell has always been opposed to it; and one of the very first utterances of the present Viceroy was that special favours to one community meant disability to others.

On what ground it is possible to justify this unequal treatment ? The Mahomedans, I admit, are in every way qualified for political franchise and for membership, but are the Hindus less qualified ? The argument of "political importance" as it is put forward by the Muslim League, is beyond the pale of rational discussion. The only sense in which it can apply to any community in India is that which Mr. Gokhale, who knows if any Indian does, how to expose dialectical sophistries, explained before the Viceroy's Council in the course of the debate which took place on Mr. Malaviya's Resolution on the amendment of the Council Regulations.

That Resolution excited an angry debate and the argument of 'political importance' was paraded, and tricked out in the costumes of sham history. Anyhow history is like the child's box of the letters of alphabet, which you may arrange in any way you please, and spell any word you please. I therefore wish to say nothing further about that argument than this, that the Hindus will never tolerate that argument or admit any kind of superiority of any Indian community over themselves, that they are the King's equal subjects and claim to be treated as such, that they feel that they have been subjected to an unmerited humiliation by their Government, and that they shall never rest contented so long as that humiliation is not removed. Mr. (now Sir Lewis Jenkins, the Home Member, perpetrated a cynical joke at their expense when to Mr. Malaviya's Resolution he replied that before the Government could undertake to correct the disproportionate representation of Mahomedans, the Hindus must first convert the Mahomedans to their view. It is official pronouncements like this which compromise the strict equity of British rule.

Now it must never be forgotten that the Hindus never said that the Mahomedan representation in the Councils should be strictly according to the numerical strength of the

Mahomedan community and consequently they never grudging Lord Morley's concession of representation to the Mahomedans "somewhat in excess of their numerical strength", although they urged that there should one general electorate for both communities, and that the excess should be made up by Government nominations. Subsequently finding themselves face to face with the demand for total separation they agreed to the present system of Mahomedan representation as the lesser of the two evils, and in the belief that only a few seats would be left open for the separate Mahomedan electorate. But the Regulations secured to the Mahomedans excessive representation by means of their separate electorate, and over and above that, gave them the right to secure as many seats as they could through the joint electorate. This was a great deal more than Lord Morley had ever intended, and for this the Government of India is wholly responsible.

Undoubtedly joint electorates have their advantages; they are a check upon the evil of total separation and hence some of our most enlightened leaders have always supported them. But it is my decided opinion, which I believe is shared by a considerable body of my countrymen and which I here venture to express with due deference to some of my most public-spirited Mahomedan friends, that with the excessive representation secured to the Mahomedans through their separate electorates joint electorates are incompatible, and that if this excessive representation remains it would be impossible to maintain them. For the existing arrangement puts the Hindus in a very awkward position. If, when the Mahomedans have secured a share of representation in excess of what their numbers justify by means of their separate electorate, the Hindus oppose them in the elections by joint electorates, they lay themselves open to the charge of sectarian hostility and other charges which partisanship can invent; but if they act



otherwise they deprive themselves even of that little which they owe to the bounty of Anglo-Indian impartiality. Is it fair to the Hindus that they should be thus placed between the devil and the deep sea ? You will observe, gentlemen, that in urging this point I set up no claim of historical, or political or any other sort of importance on behalf of the Hindus, but only the claim of justice and equity.

Then there are other concessions which have been made to the Mahomedans and refused to the Hindus. They have been given direct representation which has not been given to the Hindus. Their voting qualifications are easier and more liberal than those laid down for the Hindus. I do not object to these concessions to the Mahomedans ; I think they are just and wise, but I contend that the Hindus are equally entitled to them. The Regulations concerning this matter need to be amended, for as they are, they are unfair to the Hindus, and indeed to every other community except the Mahomedans.

Some local Governments, it would seem, were not satisfied even with the excessive representation conceded to the Mahomedans under the Regulations, and they added to it by further nominations. The Governments of the Punjab and the United Provinces have been conspicuous for this liberality to the Mahomedans, though the Hindus have suffered.

It is this one-sided policy of the Government on the one hand, and the separatist propaganda started by a section of the Mahomedans on the other, which have excited and to some extent even embittered the Hindu mind. In politics the Hindus of modern times have never been sectarian, the greatest political movement in which they have always taken a conspicuous part has been national from the beginning, and they have always been the staunchest opponents of the separatist policy in any shape of form. But

the enemies of Indian nationalism have proved too strong after all. Whenever there is an attempt—however feeble it may be—to bring about reconciliation between the two great communities, they do their worst to frustrate it. When, under the advice of Sir William Wedderburn and H. H. the Aga Khan, the representatives of the two communities were about to meet at Allahabad a year ago with the object of reconciling their differences, an Anglo-Indian paper which is believed to be an organ of the Civil Service, remarked, "Why do these men want to unite the two communities if it is not to unite them against the Government?"\* this one remark throws a ghastly light upon the political situation in India. And yet in some quarters the Hindus have sometimes been blamed for starting their own organisations, while no objection seems to be felt against the Muslim League. Sectarian political organisations are always objectionable, and nowhere more so than in India, where racial, religious, and social prejudices are apt to enter into their composition and colour and pervert the real aim for which they are started. But when one community adopts the policy of exclusiveness and separation, and is encouraged in its unwise course by those who ought to know better, the other communities whose interests are thus threatened, cannot be blamed if they adopt a similar policy in sheer self-defence. It is not easy to preach the virtue of forbearance to those who are smarting under a sense of humiliation, and whose every effort for reconciliation is attributed to some dark and sinister design on their part.

I am a nationalist, and detest sectarianism in politics, but I think the circumstances of the time furnish ample justification for the starting of Hindu Sabhas at least in some parts of the country.

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\* After events have clearly shown that to a considerable extent the combination organised by certain leaders has developed with an anti-British campaign.—*Editor.*

Still my faith in Indian nationalism is so strong that I look upon the rise of sectarian movements as a passing phase. Whatever partisans on both sides may say, the Hindus and Mahomedans are the two indestructible factors of Indian nationality, the interests of both are identical and the one cannot do without the other. Beyond the questions of their share in Council representation or in the public service, lie questions of far wider and deeper importance, in the right solutions of which both are equally interested, but which will never be rightly solved without the mutual efforts of both. I think sensible men are beginning to feel in their heart of hearts that the university schemes of the two communities would not at this moment be confronted by certain difficulties and labouring under certain disadvantages, if the Hindus and Mahomedans were more united than they are, and if the Government felt that it was face to face with the demand of a united people, for education upon its own independent and national lines. Thus, while there are some disintegrating forces on the one hand, the intellectual upheaval of recent times has revealed to us on the other hand the working of some forces, which make for unity ; and that man—be he Hindu or Mahomedan, Parsi or European—would be guilty of the gravest disservice to the country, who for the sake of some paltry personal or sectarian advantage would do anything to retard that unifying process, by raising false political issues or by reviving the memories of "old, unhappy, far-off things" over which time has thrown the curtain of oblivion.

The separate representation of the landlords is open to most of the objections raised against separate and excessive Mahomedan representation. The excessive representation of the landed interests in the Councils may be judged by the number of landlords that are there. Now, nobody denies the importance of the landed interest in India, but is its present representation fair to other classes and interests?

Most of the landlords belong to the general middle class of the country and form, therefore, a considerable proportion of the electorates which are supposed to elect representatives of that class. The landlords, therefore, have a good chance of being elected by these electorates, and many of them have, as a matter of fact, been thus elected. But in addition to this, they have been given a substantial separate representation. They dominate the district boards, they are strong in the municipal boards, and a large proportion of nominative seats are ordinarily kept open for them. The representatives of the educated classes are nowhere. And yet one of the main objects of Lord Morley's reforms was to make room in the councils for an adequate proportion of these classes; and it was based upon a very sound principle. You want in the councils men who are educated and more or less versed in public affairs, who have the intelligence to appreciate the ideals of British civilization and British government, and who alone are fitted by their training to help the Government in moulding our institutions according to the needs of the new times. The landed magnates are at best a conservative force—not in the sense in which that phrase is applicable to the landlord class in England, which is educated, intelligent and conversant with public affairs—but a body of men who are backward in knowledge and wedded to retrospective habits of thought, and whose golden age lies behind the mists of the past. Their preponderance in the councils can never be helpful to the Government in its work of reform, and especially in respect of agrarian legislation it is a positive drawback. They may be useful to the bureaucracy by way of a counterpoise to the opinions of the advanced classes—and this purpose they not unoften serve when Government has to brush aside some importunate demand of the educated classes—but they in no way represent the views and sentiments of the masses.

Our next complaint against the Regulations is that they have given us an extremely limited franchise, and except in the case of Mahomedans and landlords, the representation of the middle classes has been secured by indirect elections. For the Imperial Council, the general population has no vote whatever—Indian members of each Provincial Council, themselves elected by a certain number of delegates from the local boards including one member for the local university, return two members to the Imperial Council. The process of election of members to the Provincial Council may be broadly stated thus: a limited proportion of the general population elects a certain number of members to the municipal and district boards, to which a certain proportion of nominated members is added. The board composed of both the elected and the nominated members elects two or three delegates (except in Madras where under the new Regulations the members of the boards directly elect the members of the Council). The delegates thus elected by a certain number of municipal and district boards form a constituency to return a member to the Provincial Council. To call this process 'indirect election' is not accurate, because there are so many stages of the filtration of public opinion that you cannot say that the people have any real voice or choice in the election of councillors. The councillors are not responsible to the delegates who serve a temporary purpose and then disappear; the delegates are not responsible to their respective boards, for it matters little to them what these boards think of their actions; the boards are not responsible to the people, for the people elect them for quite different purposes, and the election of members to the council is certainly not one of them. This is enough to condemn the present system, but there is something more to be said against it, for in some provinces the delegates of municipal and district boards are mixed up, and the urban vote which belongs to the more

educated classes living in towns is swamped by the vote of the rural population which is admittedly less advanced. Secondly, nearly half the members of the local boards are nominated by Government, and, therefore the indirect influence of Government is present in every election. To call a member elected by this tortuous process a representative of the people is a misnomer. What is the extent of the franchise upon which even this peculiar election is based? Some twenty or twenty-five vote in a city of a hundred or two hundred thousand souls. If one of the principal functions of popular institutions is to give political education to the people, what can you say of a system in which not more than one in a thousand can have the slightest interest? As an instrument of popular education the present system is a failure. Not even the educated classes can be much interested as hardly one per cent of them is directly affected by it. In India, where the educated minority is very small, it is of the utmost importance that the interest of this minority should be enlisted in public affairs, and this can be achieved only by giving them a direct interest in the choice of their representatives. Therefore, I contend that besides the local bodies, all men possessing certain educational and property qualifications should have votes for electing members to the councils; and that the representation may be genuine and popular, the process of indirect election should be done away with as far as possible, the delegation system should be abolished, the nominated members of local bodies should have no council franchise, and new constituencies should be formed consisting of elected members of local bodies and others who possess certain educational and property qualifications. Even then the electorate will not be very large, and the constituencies will be much less democratic than those which elect directors to banks or railway boards in England.

Another point upon which I should like to make a few observations refers to the position of non-official majorities in provincial councils. One general objection which applies to all the councils is that the non-official majority is composed of both elected and nominated members, which, as the councils are now constituted, means a standing and indeed an overwhelming official majority in every one of them. The Bengal Council is better off in this respect, for there the elected members have a small majority ; but this, too, is ineffective as some of the elected members are practically official members. In every other council the members returned under the present system are in a minority as against the official and nominated members combined. Take for instance the U. P. Council which at present consists of 46 members—20 elected, 6 nominated, and the rest, official members. Now, who are these six nominated members ? Three are Indian Chiefs, who seldom attend council meetings ; nor can we blame them for this, for really they have little interest in the ordinary legislation of British India, though they may always be depended upon to support the Government. One is a landed magnate who does not know English, one is an Englishman representing the indigo planters' interest, and one a Hindu banker also innocent of English. These six members are as good as the officials in the Council, and by their conduct have thoroughly justified their claims to be considered among the immovable adherents of the official view of public questions. What is true of the U. P. Council is far more true of the Punjab Council, and more or less true of every other Council in India. I say nothing as to the composition of the elected minority itself, although when you consider that one of them is an Englishman, a representative of English trade, and another an Indian member for the local university and consequently elected by a quasi-official body, the representation of independent Indian opinion would appear still more inade-

quate. Did Lord Morley mean this sort of non-official majority when he granted us the concession? I do not think he did; his intention was to give us a substantial non-official majority.

The authorities instead of giving us a genuine non-official majority have given us an illusory one. And we may judge the tree by its fruits. Nearly every resolution moved by the non-official Indian members in the U. P. Council has been rejected—and rejected by overwhelming majorities, for besides some of the elected members the nominated members were always ready to support the Government. I do not say that the Government should not be supported when it is in the right, nor that all the elected members should always be of one mind; but I think that the largeness of the adverse majorities, if analysed, would show that the resolutions of the Indian members were defeated because the Council is so constituted that they can never command even a bare majority without the acquiescence, of the Government. The bureaucracy have good reasons to chuckle over Lord Morley's concession because they have found easy means to reduce it to a nullity in actual practice. Our demand upon this point is very moderate. We say that in every Provincial Council, there should be a clear majority of elected members. This will by no means weaken the Government by leaving it at the mercy of a hostile majority; for this majority—whatever may be its extent—will be a composite majority of Indians and Englishmen, landlords and lawyers, Hindus and Mahomedans, who would on very rare occasions be found to present a united front to the Government, and when they do, it would, as I think, and as Lord Morley himself said, be wise for the Government to reconsider its position and think twice before passing a measure confronted by a united and solid opposition of all the elected members.



When such is the case with the Provincial Councils where we have non-official majorities, it is perhaps useless to bewail the fate of Indian members' resolutions in the Imperial Council which possesses an official majority under the statute. Yet the reasons given by Lord Morley for non-official majorities to the Provincial Councils seem to me apply with equal force to a similar arrangement in the Viceroy's Council as well. What is the good of debating a resolution when its defeat is a foregone conclusion? I do not deny that even this ineffectual and artificial debating is an improvement upon the past. The Government is, no doubt, put upon its defence, it has to state publicly its reasons for adopting or opposing any particular measure, and this, in my opinion, assists in some measure the political education of the people. But there is justice in our complaint nevertheless; and I think the Imperial Government would inspire greater confidence in the public, if it showed that its measures were passed after a genuine debate, and not by the sheer force of its official votes.

There are many other very important points which require discussion, such as the powers given to Imperial and Provincial Governments to disallow the election of any one without giving any reason whatever, the restrictions placed upon the non-official members in respect of discussing certain matters and of dividing the Council on the Budget, &c. But I must not try your patience too much upon the question of Council Regulations, when I have yet to invite your attention, however briefly and concisely, to two or three other important matters which are now before the Government, and in which the whole country is interested.

I have discussed some of the most salient points with reference to the question of representation in the Legislative Councils. That question with special reference to local bodies has lately been brought to the front by the Government of the United Provinces. The famous "Burn Circular

has been widely discussed in the press, and as you are aware has deeply excited the whole Hindu community. When the Reform scheme was before the public, Sir John Hewett discussed the question of introducing the principle of communal representation into our local bodies and declared himself against it. In his letter to the Government of India dated the 16th March 1908, he says that "he agrees with the general consensus of opinion, official and non-official, that there is no necessity for any radical change of principle, and the application to local bodies of any system of class representation appears to him uncalled for and inexpedient." In the United Provinces the Mahomedans form 14 per cent. of the population as against 84 per cent. of Hindus. But in 1909, according to Sir John Hewett, "Mahomedan electors formed 23 per cent of the total number of electors for district boards ..... In as many as 29 districts out of 45, the proportion of Mahomedan members was greater than the proportion of Mahomedans to the total population." According to him, of 666 members of district boards, 445 were Hindus and 189 Mahomedans (exclusive of official members), and so, while holding that "the Mahomedans were entitled to more than a proportional representation, it could not be said that the present system affected them unfavourably." This was in 1909; in the middle of this year, after the issue of the Burn Circular, the Local Government obtained fresh statistics on the point which show that at present in district boards there are 116 Hindu and 67 Mahomedan elected members, 10 Hindu and 2 Mahomedan nominated members; and in municipal boards 207 Hindu and 89 Mahomedan elected members, and 36 Hindu and 36 Mahomedan nominated members.

I think these figures conclusively prove that the Mahomedans of the United Provinces have no real grievance in respect of their share in local self-government; that, if any thing, they enjoy a disproportionately large representa-

tion in local bodies, to which the Hindus have never yet objected, because of the friendly relations existing between the two communities, but which they will now resent and justly resent, if the Mahomedans claim it as a matter of right, and the Government admits that right.

The Burn Circular is based upon the false assumption that the Government having given certain pledges to Mahomedans in respect of their separate and excessive representation in the councils, they are entitled to the same concession in respect of local bodies, and so it proposes that a certain proportion of their members in the boards should be secured to them by their separate electorate on the basis of their proportion in the general population with 50 per cent added to it, while they should be free to take part in the mixed electorates as it would be helpful in maintaining friendly relations between the two communities. I will only say that this solicitude for promoting our unity is rather a heavy draft upon our credulity.

So this last proposal about the mixed electorates I dismiss without any further comment. But it is necessary to point out that the assumption as regards Lord Morley's so-called pledges to Mahomedans is entirely unfounded, because in so far as he may be said to have given any pledge, it amounts only to this, that the representation of Mahomedans in the councils should be to use his own words, somewhat in excess of their numerical strength", which is a very different thing from adding 50 per cent. to their representation, as has been done in the case of the Legislative Council. Anyhow there is no pledge as regards Mahomedan representation in local bodies whose functions are quite different from those of the councils, and are governed by a different set of principles. Nobody has stated this point more ably or clearly than Sir John Hewett in his letter to which I have already referred.

If the proposal contained in the Burn Circular be given effect to in any form whatever, the Hindus of the United Provinces, so far as local self-government is concerned, will be practically nowhere, and this would be an injustice and a humiliation to which I am sure they will not willingly submit. You are aware how much public excitement there has been upon this matter, how even those classes who take little interest in politics, our taluqdars and *raises*, have come forward to take part in the agitation against the Burn Circular, and how strongly that scheme has been condemned by the bulk of the Indian and an influential section of the Anglo-Indian press. The separatist policy of our local Government has begun to bear fruit in the United Provinces, and a large section of the Mahomedans has been encouraged to demand 50 per cent. of representation in local bodies. I know this is not the view of a considerable body of sensible Mahomedans; on the contrary some of their men of light and leading are strongly opposed to the separatist scheme, and whatever may be their views as regards the expediency of the present system of Mahomedan representation in the councils, they are at one with the Hindus in thinking that separatism in local bodies will be disastrous to the best interests of both the communities, and will gravely imperil the chance of reconciliation between them.

Although the question of communal representation in local bodies has been raised in the United Provinces, yet in my opinion it affects all India. If the communal principle is adopted in one province, rest assured that other provinces will have to follow suit sooner or later. The Muslim League represents the views of a considerable body of Mahomedans all over India, and communal representation in local bodies is one of its principal demands. If the Government concedes that demand in one province, how can it resist it in others? But another difficulty is sure to arise.

The Hindus, if they fail in arresting the course of the separatist policy, will never submit to joint electorates along with separate Mahomedan electorates. They already demand total separation on the basis of numbers, if there is no chance of retaining the existing system. When both the parties demand complete separation, the Government can have no just ground for resisting it. But if complete separation is once allowed in the case of local bodies, it would become impossible to maintain joint electorates for the councils for long, and when these disappear and the separatist spirit pervades the whole Indian system from top to bottom, all hopes for building up an Indian nationality must be abandoned for many generations to come. It is because I feel this apprehension that I wish to submit for your consideration one or two points regarding the far-reaching consequences of the separatist policy both in local bodies and in the Legislative Councils.

First, what moral effect is likely to be produced by separatism plus class privileges upon our national character? Is it good that our political institutions should be placed before us in the light in which we should see that ignorance and knowledge, poverty and riches, numerical strength and weakness stand on the same level so far as the possession of political rights is concerned? If in every civilised country, knowledge, property and numbers are the measure of political fitness, what would be the effect upon our national character if we are accustomed to think that the reverse is the case here—that Mahomedans because they are Mahomedans deserve favour, that Hindus because they are Hindus deserve its opposite—that right and wrong are not in the nature of things but are the creations of Government? Besides, what sort of citizens does the British Government wish to produce in India—such as shall be self-respecting and justice-loving, taught to love knowledge, truth, courage, independence and equality of civil rights, or, such as shall be unjust,

corrupt, destitute of manliness, careless whether their political rights are respected by others or trampled under foot ? If the former, then Government must show that it values justice, and respects those who respect themselves. How can Government discharge its high and noble function if we are placed under institutions which are based upon a perversion of all those high principles which we have hitherto been taught to hold sacred and inviolable ?

Secondly, there is another moral danger with which the separatist policy is sure to bring us face to face one day. The idea of a united Indian nation may not be very alluring to some people, and a section of the Mahomedans may, for the present, fail to realize its true significance; but the instructed classes do care for that ideal, and they see that it is menaced by separatism. Here they find themselves in disagreement with their rulers, not only in matters of detail which can be managed by accommodation and compromise, but a matter of vital principle in respect of which no such management is possible. Now, to help the Government in its measures is the first duty of every loyal citizen; but to preserve the nation itself for which the Government exists, and to oppose every measure which threatens its existence now or in future, is an even more important duty. This is an accepted principle in every civilised country and is so here too, among those who understand western ideals. Is it then desirable that a considerable section of the educated classes should be confronted by a situation in which they find that they cannot support Government policy ? They must either approve Government's actions against their nationalist ideal, or serve the nationalist ideal against Government policy. Both alternatives are difficult. If they submit to separatism, and in a country already torn by social and sectarian differences allow those differences to be stereotyped into the premanent features of their political institu-

tions, in view of the expediencies of the day, they sacrifice their most cherished convictions and destroy the nationalist ideal. If they resist it, they weaken the chances of their securing the good-will of the Government, under which alone the realisation of their nationalist ideal is possible. For it is as clear as day that British rule in India, with all its faults and failings, all the shadows resting upon its career, is yet the symbol, the pledge, the guarantee of peace and progress, knowledge and freedom : to weaken it is to weaken the cause of civilisation. This is the dilemma which confronts the thinking portion of the Indian community, and there is no escape from it as long as, on the one hand, the people are taught in colleges and schools and by a hundred other means western ideas of liberty and nationality, western conceptions of state duties and the rights of individual man ; while on the other, they have to live under institutions which contradict these ideas. Is it reasonable to expect a people living in the midst of these cross-currents of opposite and irreconcilable forces, to give for any length of time their moral allegiance to one set of principles and their practical allegiance to another ?

I wish to invite your attention for a moment to the question of the employment of Indians in the higher grades of the Public Service, which has been before the Government for nearly a century—a question with which are associated the noblest efforts of some of our most distinguished men, among whom stands pre-eminent, the name of our Grand Old Man, Dadabhai Naoroji, to whose sagacious but passionate advocacy for more than half a century we owe a great debt in this as in so many other matters, and who in the evening of a long life spent in the service of his country, yet retains undiminished his keen interest in the proper solution of that question. Gentlemen, so far as the views and intentions of the British Parliament and British Sovereigns are concerned, we have

nothing to complain of and everything to be thankful for. In 1833, the British Parliament passed a famous statute to the effect "that no native of India shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the British Government, and the Board of Directors pointed out to the Government of India that "the meaning of the enactment we take to be that there shall be no governing caste in British India" and that "fitness is henceforth to be the criterion of eligibility." This parliamentary pledge was re-affirmed in the noble words of Queen Victoria's Great Proclamation of 1858, which we all know by heart.\* No effect was given to these pledges for nearly forty years. In 1870, for the first time, only one Indian was admitted to the Civil Service as against 825 Europeans. Those who want to know the history of these pledges up to date, ought to read the able and interesting pamphlet published by the Hon. Mr. N. Subba Rao Pantulu a few months back. The opinions of some of the most distinguished English statesmen connected with India, are matters of history and have often been quoted. I shall quote a competent foreign observer, who is a friendly critic of the Indian Government and whose book on "The Administrative Problems of India" Lord Morley as well as the Civil Service has praised. M Chailley says, "About the year 1880, then after fifty years, I will not say of good-will, but of attempts which were really honourable, the English had not yet succeeded in intimately connecting the natives with their administrative work. The Charter Acts of 1833 and 1853, the Proclamation of 1858 and the Act of 1870, had all been ineffi-

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\* The state documents issued up to 1910 are merely milestones on the way: The recent Montague-Chelmsford act is the forward hand on the dial of national life. The great danger against which the Indian Ministers should be on guard is the spirit of provincialism—*Editor*.



cacious," and he calls those pledges "flattering words, solemn promises, and blank cheques." In 1875, Lord Lytton said : " We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them ; and we have chosen the least straightforward course." And so it has happened that, as pointed out by the Hon Mr. Subba Rao, "from 1870 to 1886 .....there were 11 Indians as against 567 (Europeans); from 1886 to 1910, 68 as against 1235 Europeans. Thus, from 1853 up to date, there were only 80 Indians as against 2,636 Europeans, i. e. about 3 per cent. At the present moment we find 42 Indians as against 1264 Europeans, a little over 5 per cent, of the total strength of the Civil Service."

If this is our position in what is called the Indian Civil Service, let us see how we stand in other departments of the Government. In the higher grades of the Police, our highest limit is 5 per cent. ; in the Political department, there is only one Indian. In the course of the budget discussion in the early part of this year, Mr. Gokhale quoted certain figures, the accuracy of which was not questioned by the Government, which have a melancholy interest for the Indian people. In the Salt demartment in all India, excluding Madras, out of 30 officers on salaries ranging from Rs. 500 to Rs. 3,000, only 3 are Indians ; in the Customs, out of 21 officers with salaries ranging between Rs. 450 and Rs. 2,500 a month, only two are Indians ; in the Post Office, out of 41 appointments with salaries between Rs. 500, and Rs. 3,500 a month, only 4 are held by Indians and these are on the lower rungs of the ladder ; in the Telegraphs, out of 36 appointments with salaries between Rs. 500 and Rs. 3,000 a month, only 3 are held by Indians ; in the Railways, out of 774 appointments with salaries between Rs. 500 and Rs. 3,500, only 10 are held by Indians. The official member for the Railways frankly avowed that

Indians were not fit for the superior grades of service in his department. Thus do even high officials sometimes add insult to injury when they find no better defence for their favourite course.\*

This is not fulfilling the Parliamentary pledges, this is tantalising the Indian people. Lord Curzon realized this state of things, and throwing off the mask with characteristic boldness, gave the Indian people to understand that the Queen's Proclamation might be treated as an equivocal document, and that the bulk of the higher posts must be retained by Englishmen till the end of time. Lord Morley afterwards vigorously repudiated this pettifogging construction of the Royal pledge; but it must be confessed that Lord Curzon expressed the real sentiment of the Anglo-Indian community at large. He expressed the sentiment of the dominant class in its nakedness; but that sentiment sometimes appears in more respectable garbs. For instance, we are told that though Indians are very clever in passing examinations and are intelligent in many things, yet they are deficient in what is called 'character'; they lack certain mystic governing qualities which are the birth-right of an Englishman; and that though they may do well enough as a superior order of clerks, or even as High Court judges, yet they are not quite fit for high executive and administrative offices. Now this word 'character' in the Anglo-Indian vocabulary, covers a multitude of excuses for excluding Indians from the higher grades of the public service of their country, and when they claim any high posts all sorts of possible and impossible conditions are considered necessary for their fitness for those posts. Only the other day Lord Macdonnell objected to the appointment of an Indian to the Governor-General's Executive Council on the ground that there was no such Indian in all India in whom

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\* Anglo-Indian officials will now think twice before trotting out the theories of fitness, initiative, grasp of details and *passforth*—*Editor*.

all India could repose perfect confidence. As if it were a self-evident truth that all India felt perfect confidence in every high British official. With reference to the qualifications demanded by some people of an ideal Anglo-Egyptian official, Lord Cromer relates an amusing anecdote in his book on "Modern Egypt" which illustrates my point. A lady once asked Madame de Stael to recommend a tutor for her boy. That tutor was to be a gentleman with perfect manners, and a thorough knowledge of the world, a classical scholar and an accomplished linguist; he was to exercise supreme authority over his pupil, and at the same time he was to show such a degree of tact that his authority was to be unfelt; in fact he was to possess almost every moral attribute and intellectual faculty; and lastly, he was to place all these qualities in the service of Madame de Stael's friend for a very low salary. Madame de Stael replied, "My dear, I perfectly understand the sort of man you want, but I must tell you that if I find him I would marry him."

Now from what I have just said, it must not be understood that we do not appreciate what the Government has done for us in this respect in recent times. The appointment of two Indians to the Secretary of State's Council and an Indian to every Executive Council here was a great forward step in the right direction, which we owe entirely to Lord Morley's powerful advocacy and influence, backed up by Lord Minto, but which was most strongly opposed by the bureaucracy here and their powerful supporters in England. Lord Morley did indeed give effect to Queen Victoria's Proclamation, so far as it lay in him, and he has thereby done something to raise the character of British rule in this country. But we cannot always have a Lord Morley at the India Office and at the same time a Viceroy like Lord Minto. They did what two great and generous-hearted statesmen could do; but the real evil lies in the sys-

tem under which Indians can never fairly compete with Englishmen, and which the occasional efforts of exceptional statesmen cannot change, because it is supported by the vested interests of the most powerful body of Englishmen in India. There is only one way in which some change of a permanent character may be effected in the existing system, and justice may be done to Indians and that is to grant us the boon of "simultaneous examinations" for the Indian Civil Service.\*

This is an old grievance of the Indians. Sixty years ago the justice of this grievance was felt and admitted by the English statesmen of the day. In 1853, Lord Stanley, (afterwards Earl of Derby) said in Parliament : "He could not refrain from expressing his conviction that, in refusing to carry on examinations in India and in England—a thing that was easily practicable—the Government were, in fact, negating that which they declared to be one of the principal objects of their Bill, and confining the Civil Service, as heretofore, to Englishmen. That result was unjust, and he believed it would be most pernicious." In 1860, the Secretary of State appointed a Committee of five distinguished Anglo-Indians (all members of the India Council) to report at so how effect could be given to the Parliamentary pledges. And they recommended simultaneous examinations for the Civil Service, to be held in India and England. However, nothing further was done, and so nine years later, the Duke of Argyll (then Secretary of State for India) said in Parliament. "If the only door of admission to the Civil Service of India is a competitive examination carried on in London, what chance or what possibility is there of natives acquiring that fair share in the administration of their own country which their education and ability would enable them to fulfil, and therefore entitle to them to possess?" In 1893,

\* The dream has come from the gate of horn: the competitive examination will now be held in India.—*Editor.*

the House of Commons adopted a resolution in favour of simultaneous examinations which the Secretary of State sent to the Government of India for their opinion, laying down the condition "that it is indispensable that an adequate number of the members of the Civil Service shall always be Europeans, and that no scheme would be admissible which does not fulfil that essential condition." The Secretary of State's "essential condition" furnished a sufficient excuse to the Government of India for reporting against the advisability of giving effect at all to the resolution of the House of Commons. And no English or Anglo-Indian statesman has touched that question since. Only the other day in the course of the debate on the Hon. Mr. Subba Rao's resolution on the Public Service question, Mr (now Sir Archdale) Earle, speaking for the Government said that the Government of India could give him no encouragement in that respect.

Now, whatever excuse may be devised for the monopoly of the Indian Civil Service by Englishmen, to deny the boon of simultaneous examinations to India is virtually to reduce the Royal and Parliamentary pledges to a dead letter, and tell them in so many words that however able and qualified they may be, they must remain content with such crumbs as may fall from the table of the ruling class ; that although in the Indian States they may rise to the highest positions, yet under the British Government they must abandon that hope ; that though to administer the country through Indian agency would be more economical, yet an expensive foreign agency must be maintained in the interest of race ascendancy. But this is an impossible system and must be reformed—the earlier the better for all concerned. The statesmen of other days foresaw the situation which has now arisen, and told their countrymen how to meet it. Some sixty years ago that famous Anglo-Indian statesman, Mount-Stuart Elphinstone wrote as follows :—" I conceive that the

administration of all the departments of a great country by a small number of foreign visitors in a state of isolation produced by a difference of religion, ideas and manners which cut them off from all intimate communion with the people, can never be contemplated as a permanent state of things. I conceive also that the progress of education among the natives renders such a scheme impracticable." Only the other day, while reviewing Sir H. Cotton's recently published book, Mr. Frederic Harrison remarked: "The stock objection that Indians of requisite energy and sagacity, such as statesmanship demands, cannot be produced among these millions, is shown to be an obsolete prejudice. There is an ample store of able men to take the task of government into their hands if they were trusted. But the old bureaucratic prejudice bars the way." Yes, it is the bureaucratic prejudice which stands in the way of our demand; it is bureaucracy whose interests are threatened and who have always opposed the introduction of simultaneous examinations because they know that it would seriously affect their monopoly in the higher grades of the Public Service.

The question of the employment of Indians in the higher grades of the Public Service is not a question of mere loaves and fishes, it is not a question which affects a very limited class of educated Indians only, but one which affects the whole Indian people, because it touches the sentiment of their national self-respect and is intimately connected with their most legitimate ambitions and aspirations. Foreign rule is generally considered an evil, not only because it is materially disadvantageous to the ruled, but because it hurts some of the noblest of human sentiments. It is disliked because the dominant class is allowed privileges which are denied to the subject races. If British rule in India is to be looked upon by the people not as an alien but a national

government, differential treatment based upon distinctions of race must be abandoned and equal treatment accorded to all as we were promised by the Sovereign and Parliament. India feels the injustice of the present system—the inequality of treatment in the field of the Public Service, Nothing can convince the Indian that though he may be fit for the Prime Ministership of Hyderabad, he is unfit for a Lieutenant-Governorship or even a Chief Commissionership in British India. It is the bar sinister of race which is responsible for our exclusion from the highest post in our own country : and it is when viewed in this light that British rule, with all its high ideals and generous professions, compares so unfavourably with Moghal rule in its palmiest days. They deceive themselves who think that the Indian demand in respect of the Public Service is the demand of a small section of the educated community in which the people are not interested ; for no people, however servile or inert, willingly submit to political disabilities, and no foreign government can ever become really popular which emphasises its foreign character by having a governing caste of its own. In every country it is only a few who can expect to hold the highest offices ; but the mere fact that these offices are open to all exercises a stimulating effect upon the national energies and supplies a most powerful impetus to progress. "It is a very shallow view of the springs of political action in a community," says Mill, "which thinks such things unimportant because the number of those in a position actually to profit by the concession might not be very considerable. That limited number will be composed precisely of those who have most moral power over the rest ; and men are not so destitute of the sense of collective degradation as not to feel the withholding of an advantage from even one person, because of a circumstance which they all have in common with him, an affront to all." It is absolutely necessary for the good of India that British rule should endure ; but then it must base

itself upon the genuine regard and affection of the Indian people, and the only way to win their genuine regard and affection is to make them know and feel that they are the equal subjects of the British Crown and enjoy to the full the rights and privileges of British citizenship. Short-sighted is that statesmanship which ignores this capital fact of the present situation. You may do everything with bayonets except sit upon them, said a great European statesman ; and our rulers must know that the old India has passed or is fast passing away and a new India has arisen which has learnt their ideas and is inspired by their ideals, that the tidal wave of the new spirit which is transforming all Asia is passing over this country also, and that the claim of her people to equal treatment in the Public Service, can no longer be safely ignored. The age of pledges and professions is past ; if Indian sentiment is to be conciliated, the good faith of our rulers must be attested by actual deeds

Among the many important questions that have been prominently before the public and the Government, that of education is perhaps the most important. The growing demand for high education on national lines has found expression in the schemes of the Hindu and Mahomedan universities, and that for mass education in Mr Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill. That education is one of the noblest gifts of England to India is generally admitted ; but Lord Curzon evidently thought otherwise, and so he passed certain measures which had the effect of narrowing the area of high education and making it more expensive.\* It came to be said in his time that Indians were over-educated, that education had turned their heads and that they had become so numerous that the Government did not know what to do with them. Lord Curzon's Universities Act excited wide-spread dissatisfaction both among Hindus

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\* No downward tendency is as yet visible, though Indian Ministers are now at the helm—*Editor*.



and Mahomedans, but was strongly supported by the bureaucracy, and it became apparent to the people that the rulers of our day had different educational ideals from those which had inspired Bentinck and Macaulay. Thoughtful men of all communities have always felt the necessity of independent institutions which, while supplementing the efforts of Government to disseminate education, will supply the deficiencies of the present system, and adapt it to India's particular conditions and requirements. It is in this view, I believe, that the Hindu and Muslim university schemes have been promulgated, and, *pace* critics of the type of a learned judge of the Madras High Court, I feel sure we all have watched with admiration the noble efforts of the promoters of both the schemes, and while congratulating them on the magnificent response their appeals have evoked from their respective co-religionists, we wish them complete success, and trust the Government will not only help them to make the universities accomplished facts, but will allow them to be really independent non-official institutions.\* While at this I cannot pass over Mr. Justice Sankaran Nair's altogether unjust condemnation of the Hindu religion Mr. Sankaran Nair is an able and independent man, and I believe that in what he said he was actuated by the best of motives. Nevertheless, he has been guilty of a most deplorable error and has brought baseless accusations against the Hindu religion as it has been preached and practised by the choicest spirits of our race from the dim dawn of history down to the present day—a religion which in spite of its many faults and aberrations produced a noble civilization, and build up a social fabric that has stood firm and unshaken amid the wrecks of nations and the storms of fate. It is reck-

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\* The Government policy is that of absolute non-interference. It will be a happy day if the new seat of learning at Benares is called the Malaviya university. No one in modern times has so strenuously wrought for and fought for the highest ideals of Hindu culture—*Editor*.

less writings like Mr. Nair's which are made use of by our political opponents who attack Hinduism in the columns of the *Times*, with the deliberate object of discrediting our political movement in the eyes of the British public.

While the university movement is an indication of our national activity in the sphere of high education, the discussion started by Mr. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill shows that we are becoming alive to the importance of improving the mental condition of the masses. The charge is often brought against the educated classes that they are indifferent to the well-being of the general community, and care for nothing beyond the satisfaction of their own political ambition. Mr. Gokhale's Bill is a sufficient answer to that charge. Mr. Gokhale, with that political prescience and practical sagacity which stand out preeminent among his many and varied endowments has raised a question which will never go to sleep again, and has thereby written his name in the history of his country. In one sense the question of elementary education for India is an old one. So far back as 1854, the famous Education Despatch of Sir Charles Wood impressed upon the Government of India the importance of the question and laid upon them the duty of educating the masses. The Education Commission of 1882 again emphasised the importance of mass education. Some halting steps in that direction were taken from time to time by Government. Later on, something was done in Lord Curzon's time and a little more has been accomplished since. Still, how little has been achieved—how much more remains to be done—would appear from certain figures cited by Mr. Gokhale in his speech on the introduction of his Bill in the Imperial Council. In India, according to the census of 1901, less than 6 per cent. of the whole population could read and write, even in Russia the proportion of literates was 25 per cent. As regards attendance

at school, last year in America 21 per cent, of the whole population were receiving elementary education; in Great Britain and Ireland, from 20 to 17 per cent.; in Japan, 11 per cent; in Russia, between 4 and 5 per cent; while in India the proportion was 1.9 per cent. In most of the European countries elementary education is both compulsory and free; in India it is neither compulsory nor free. As regards the expenditure on elementary education in some of the countries referred to by Mr. Gokhale, it is interesting to observe that while in the United States of America, the expenditure per head of the population is 16s., in England and Wales 10s., in Japan 1s. 2d., and in Russia 7½ d., in India it is barely one penny. And the result of this parsimony in education and extravagance in the military and other departments is that for mental backwardness India is a byword among the nations of the world. It is to remedy this evil—to wipe away this stain—that Mr. Gokhale has brought in his Bill—a most modest and cautious measure when you consider how limited, tentative and hedged round with a number of safeguards against precipitate action it is, how careful of the prejudices and susceptibilities of the people and how moderate in its demand upon the public purse. The Bill is not a perfect measure, which perhaps no measure is, and may have to undergo several changes before it becomes law; but if we are to have elementary education for the masses, there is no escape from its two fundamental principles, compulsion and education rate. The principle of compulsion is suggested by the practical experience of the whole civilized world; and no argument has yet convinced me that, with proper safeguards, it is not equally applicable to India.

As regards the provision for the levy of a special education rate, I, for one, agree with those who think that the whole liability for elementary education rests upon the

shoulders of Government; but when the Government says it cannot afford the cost of such a measure, then the only course left open to us is to draw upon our own limited resources in the shape of a local education rate, and ask the Government to contribute a certain proportion from its own exchequer. If we care for mass education—if we feel that we owe a duty to those who cannot help themselves—then we ought not to grudge a small local education rate, which will fall upon us no doubt, but which we should be prepared to bear in the cause of our own people.

But besides those who object to the principle of compulsion, and those who object to free elementary education on financial grounds, there are some who object to it on social and political grounds. To those who are opposed to it because they dread the loss of their menial servants, and desire that millions of poor men may remain steeped in ignorance so that a few wealthy magnates may live in luxury, I have nothing to say; but I am surprised that even in some respectable English journals opposition has been offered to Mr. Gokhale's Bill on the ground that education would create political discontent among the masses, and thus tend to disturb the even tenor of British rule in India. We are seriously told by these public instructors that the safety of British rule in India lies in the ignorance of its subject people, and that their advance in knowledge and intelligence would make them disaffected towards it. On the contrary, we who are not so intelligent as these English journalists, think that the economic and political changes of recent years make it more necessary than ever that the people should be educated, that when the basis of popular institutions has been laid in this country it has become of the utmost importance that the electorates should be intelligent and instructed, and that the only way to enable the masses to appreciate British rule is to communicate to them

something of that knowledge which is the glory of Western civilization. Upon this point my answer is in the following words of Lord Cromer:—

“It is on every ground of the highest importance that a sustained effort should be made to place elementary education in Egypt on a sound footing. The schoolmaster is abroad in the land. We may wish him well, but no one who is interested in the future of the country should blind himself to the fact that his successful advance carries with it certain unavoidable disadvantages. The process of manufacturing demagogues has, in fact, not only already begun, but may be said to be well advanced. The intellectual phase through which India is now passing stands before the world as a warning that it is unwise, even if it be not dangerous, to create too wide a gap between the state of education of the higher and of the lowest classes in an oriental country governed under the inspiration of a Western democracy. High education cannot and ought not to be checked or discouraged. The policy advocated by Macaulay is sound. Moreover, it is the only policy worthy of a civilized nation. But if it is to be carried out without danger to the State, the ignorance of the masses should be tempered *pari passu* with the intellectual advance of those who are destined to be their leaders. It is neither wise nor just that the people should be left intellectually defenceless in the presence of the hare-brained and empirical projects which the political charlatan, himself but half-educated, will not fail to pour into their credulous ears. In this early part of the twentieth century there is no possible general remedy against the demagogue except that which consists in educating those who are his natural prey, to such an extent that they may, at all events, have some chance of discerning the imposture which but too often lurks beneath his perfervid eloquence and political quackery.”

In spite of such objections as I have just noticed, the Elementary Education Bill has met with a hearty response from the whole country. The Hindus are enthusiastic about it; and so are the Mahomedans, with the exception of some familiar figures on the public stage. The Aga Khan, the recognised leader of the educated Muslim community, sounded the true note in his speech at the Mahomedan Educational Conference at Delhi which shows that he is even a more thorough-going advocate of compulsory and free primary education than any Hindu is. "It is the duty of Government" he said, "to supply primary education to the masses which is beyond the means and scope of voluntary efforts in any civilized country.....I am also delighted that an enlightened public opinion has so unmistakably pronounced itself in favour of compulsory universal education. Gentlemen, believe me no country can ever flourish or make its mark as a nation as long as the principle of compulsion is absent. The colossal ignorance of the Indian masses militates against uniting them as a nation; and the ideal of a united nation is an ideal which we must constantly cherish." And addressing his co-religionists he said, "You stand to gain more by the carrying out of the principles of the Hon. Mr. Gokhale's Bill than any other section of the people in India, provided care is taken in the adjustment of details." These are wise words, and I trust the Muslim League will take them to heart. An influential section of the Anglo-Indian press is also on our side upon this question, and the Government of India and his Majesty's Government are both sympathetic, as is amply demonstrated by the terms in which the Durbar grant of Rs. 50 lakhs for popular education was announced. Opposed to us are the local Governments and the bulk of the Indian Civil Service; but in this respect they are only true to their time-honoured traditions, and if the decision of the Imperial Government

depends altogether upon their advice, then we must not expect to get compulsory education for another fifty years. Speaking for myself, I may be allowed to say this, that I attach so much importance to this question, that if all the recent reforms were placed on one side, and free and compulsory primary education for the masses on the other, and I were asked to make my choice between them, I would not hesitate for a moment in choosing the latter, because I look upon it as the one agency which will lift up the whole nation to a higher level of intelligence, and fit it to play its proper part in the civilization of the world.

There are some other questions which are important and pressing for solution; but I have taken up so much of your time that I dare not even touch them. For instance, there is the question of the status of Indians in British colonies—specially in South Africa, which is a most painful question when we consider how we have been treated in this matter by the Imperial Government itself, although we have every reason to express our gratitude to the Government of India for its services on our behalf. Again the question of the separation of executive and judicial functions has been before the Government for a quarter of a century, and only two years ago we were told that the Government was devising some means to give effect to that reform. But experience has taught us that it is extremely difficult to induce the official hen to produce eggs, and when it does produce any, it takes precious long time in hatching them. Lastly, there is the question of Police reform, which is most urgently needed, which has lately attracted the attention of the Government, and in respect of which I believe some legislation is in contemplation. The Police, while it affects the daily life of the people, is the weakest spot in the Indian Administration, and yet it is curious that any criticism levelled against it excites the greatest resentment of the official

class. We can never be too thankful to Mr. Mackarness for his just exposure of our Police system, and although his pamphlet was proscribed by the Government—was this because it told the truth?—yet it called forth an amount of searching criticism which has at last opened the eyes of our rulers, and the very veiled and cautious statements of the present Under-Secretary of State show that though for ‘reasons of State’ he thought it his duty to denounce Mr. Mackarness, yet truth is beginning to prevail against official scoffings, and we trust that reforms on the lines suggested by him and other liberal-minded politicians will be undertaken. It is absolutely necessary that the confession of accused persons should not be recorded by any one excepting the trying magistrate under such conditions as shall absolutely exclude all police influence. At least 50 per cent. of the political prosecutions would never have taken place if the Police had done their duty.\*

Gentlemen, this is a very rapid survey of the present political situation as it strikes me, and I think it clearly shows that while the manifold blessings of British rule are undeniable, there are certain grievances which are equally undeniable, and need redress. English education and a closer contact with the West have raised our intelligence and expanded our vision; the example of English liberty and English enterprise has given us new ideals of citizenship, and inspired us with new conceptions of national duties. A genuine craving for popular institutions is observable on all sides, and the whole country feels the vivifying touch of the spirit of nationalism, which lies at the bottom of what is called Indian unrest, and which in

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\* The British India Police Association has drawn up a clear programme of work to remove the grievances of the public, and in furtherance of the objects in view has started its own journal to educate the employees in the lower ranks—*Editor*.



various forms and disguises pervades strife and inspires all endeavour. And so the ideal of self-government within the empire has come to be cherished by some of the best men of our generation, and with the co-operation of Englishmen they hope to realise it one day.\* For we must bear this in mind, that the destinies of India and England are now linked together, and that in order to succeed in our political struggles it is indispensable that the sympathies of the English people should be enlisted on our side. But, above all, we must instruct and organise our own public opinion, which is often a slow and difficult work. In the pursuit of a high ideal we must not forget the difficulties that beset our path. Long and weary is the journey, said Burke, that lies before those who undertake to mould a people into the unity of a nation. Our agitation in order to be effective must be national not sectarian, persistent not spasmodic, directed by intelligence and wisdom, and not impulsive and reckless. Enthusiasm is good, and even crying for the moon is sometimes good;† and I for one sympathise with those who are called visionaries and dreamers, for I know that in every active and reforming body there is always an extreme wing that is not without its uses in great human movements. I know that moderation sometimes means indifference and caution timidity, and I hold that India needs bold and enthusiastic characters—not men of pale hopes and middling expectations, but courageous natures, fanatics in the cause of their country—

“ Whose breath is agitation,

And whose life a storm whereon they ride.”

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\* The streaks of the dawn are visible on the horizon and, as the sun mounts the sky, the sap of national life will rise and put forth the noblest blossoms—*Editor*.

† Lord Morley—*Editor*.

But enthusiasm and idealism cannot achieve impossibilities. Human nature is conservative and national progress is slow of foot. First the blade, then the ear, and after that the corn in the ear—this is the law of nature. Self-government, such as obtains in British colonies, is a noble ideal, and we are perfectly justified in keeping that before our eyes; but is it attainable to-day or to-morrow or even in the lifetime of the present generation? Consider where we stand in the scale of civilisation, when we have only 4 women and 18 men per thousand who are literate; when there are millions of our countrymen whom we look upon as “untouchables”; when we have about a hundred thousand widows of less than five years, of age, and caste rules still forbid sea-voyage, and Mr. Basu’s Special Marriage Bill is condemned as a dangerous innovation; when many Hindus do not sufficiently realise the fact that there are 65 million Mahomedans whose interests and feelings have to be cared for, and the Mahomedans are equally oblivious of the interests and feelings of 240 million Hindus—when this is the condition to which we have been brought by centuries of decay and degradation, to talk of a national government for India to-day is to make ourselves the laughing-stock of the civilised world. Agitate for political rights, but do not forget that the true salvation of India lies in the amelioration of its social and moral conditions.\*

Gentlemen, pardon me for speaking to you so frankly, but I owe it to you and to myself to tell you what I feel in the innermost depth of my heart upon the general questions which are confronting us to-day. I am no pessimist; I recognise the difficulties of the high task which our duty to our motherland has laid upon us, but I am not discouraged or daunted by them. I have faith in the just and righteous instincts of the English people, and I have faith in the high destinies of my own race. We were great people once; we

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\* The new school does not accept this view at all.

shall be a great people again. Patience, courage, self-sacrifice are needed on our part; and wisdom, foresight, sympathy and faith in their own noble traditions on the part of our rulers; and I firmly believe that both are beginning to realise their duty and that the day will come—be it soon or late—when this period of suffering and strife shall come to an end, and India on the stepping-stones of her dead self, shall rise to higher stages of national existence.

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### NOTE.

An attentive perusal of the papers now given for the first time to the public in a handy form will show that Mr. Dar represented the genius of the Indian people in one of its highest and most inspiring phases, and dauntlessly faced the Bureaucracy without borrowing any weapons from the anarchist's armoury. He has praised what is good, and condemned what is barbarous. He has both banned and blessed the English Government.

The times have certainly changed, and a new party has come to the front with a Tolstoyan gospel. The lingering velleities of loyalty have been cast aside, and a determined attitude to envisage foreign rule has been taken up. New beacons have been kindled on strange peaks. But all the same, those who read the foregoing pages with an open mind will admire the luminous survey of the main tendencies and movements of Indian national life as quickened by contact with the West, and feel that the words clasp a master spell and draw a clairvoyant circle within which racial feud cannot exist, and racial bitterness cannot breathe.

The banner of progress with its golden device and streaming vanward is held high above petty jealousies and parochial prejudices : the heart never blanches, and the hand never quivers. The present strife, we all hope, will soon cease, and the grass which lies withered under the heavy tread of the wrestlers will become resurgent with its native hue when the fairies descend from unknown clouds and gently trip across the stricken sward.

LUCKNOW.

12th December 1921. }

H. L. CHATTERJI.

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